Full Score

Testimony

Five Statements
by String Quartet

Peter Dyson
1980

Preface to the score:
I was sixteen (1965) when I discovered Shostakovich. At the time I was exploring Czech contemporary music because the Supraphon label had recently appeared in the United Kingdom. I had bought a recording of Victor Kalabis's Piano Concerto and on the other side was Shostakovich's 2nd Piano Concerto. I was spellbound. I quickly began to collect all the available recordings. There were not many of them. and so I listened to every broadcast on BBC Radio 3. It was the beginning of a lifelong admiration that continues to this day. I read everything I could. There was not very much; the occasional article in a music journal, the official biographies and the words of Shostakovich himself much quoted from Soviet sources. I shared his view of "The Role of the Composer in Society". If sometimes the words and the music did not tally, I overlooked this contradiction.

I was in my mid twenties when I felt confident enough to write an extended essay (fortunately not published) on "An Examination of the Political Influences". I thought I understood. I thought I could claim to be an "expert" on Shostakovich. I remained comfortable with my view until 1979 when it was shattered by the publication of "Testimony - the memoirs of Shostakovich as related to Solomon Volkov." How could I have been so wrong? I listened to the music again for the first time with ears that heard all the pain of Shostakovich's world.

I am haunted by two photographs; the first was published on the cover of the English edition of "Testimony" (publisher - Hamish Hamilton) and is unaccredited. The copyright owner of the second is Gennadi Rozhdestvenky. They are the images on the cover of my handwritten score. It is an attempt to identify with this sort of isolation that I wrote my own "Testimony"

There is much pain and sorrow in this music; and some anger too. The images that come to mind now in 1995 are of individual lives shattered by events in Chechnya and Bosnia. There are common threads throughout all five movements, motifs of yearning and crying; the beating heart, the monotony of rocking, and a sense of dislocation. It is my poor attempt to share someone else's pain. In 1979 it was a statement that I needed to make. Time has placed Volkov's account in a broader context. Academics argue about accuracy. However music speaks for itself. You can listen to Shostakovich's voice and decide for yourself.

In all Five Statements there are a number of allusions to Shostakovich's music. At the climax of the second movement I quote the theme from "Winter - From Jewish Folk Poetry (Op 79)" in its entirety. It is the saddest tune I know. Time has not changed my view. I still feel guilty because I listened to the words and not the music.

Aut Tace Aut Loquere Meliora Silentio.
(Be silent unless what you have to say is better than silence.)
I have torn up my essay.
Instead; let music speak to those who will listen.

Peter Dyson: Great Bardfield: 9th August 1995,
the 20th Anniversary of the Death of Shostakovich.

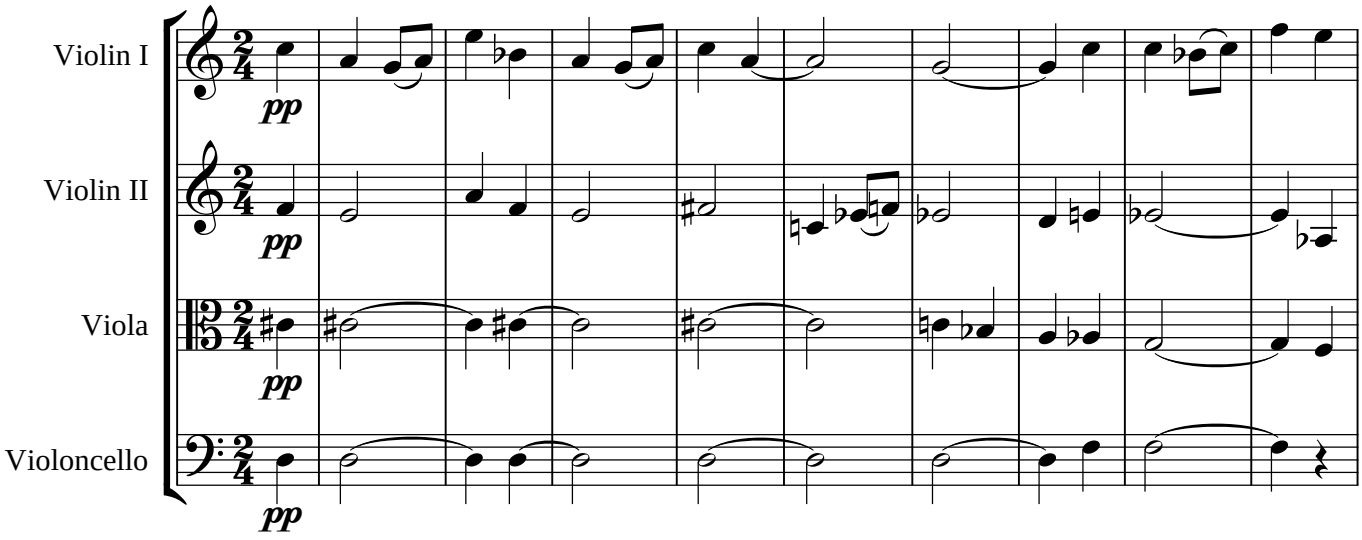
Testimony
Five Statements by String Quartet

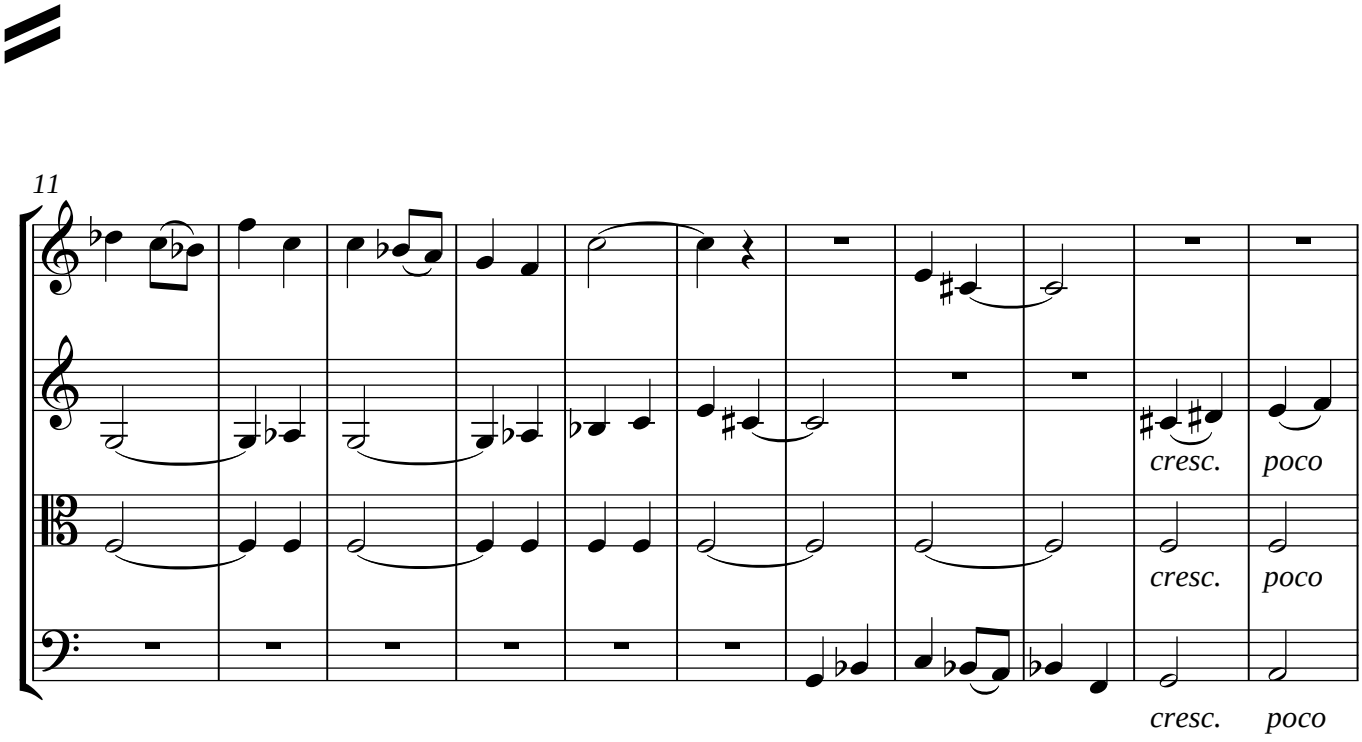
(1979 -1980)

First Statement

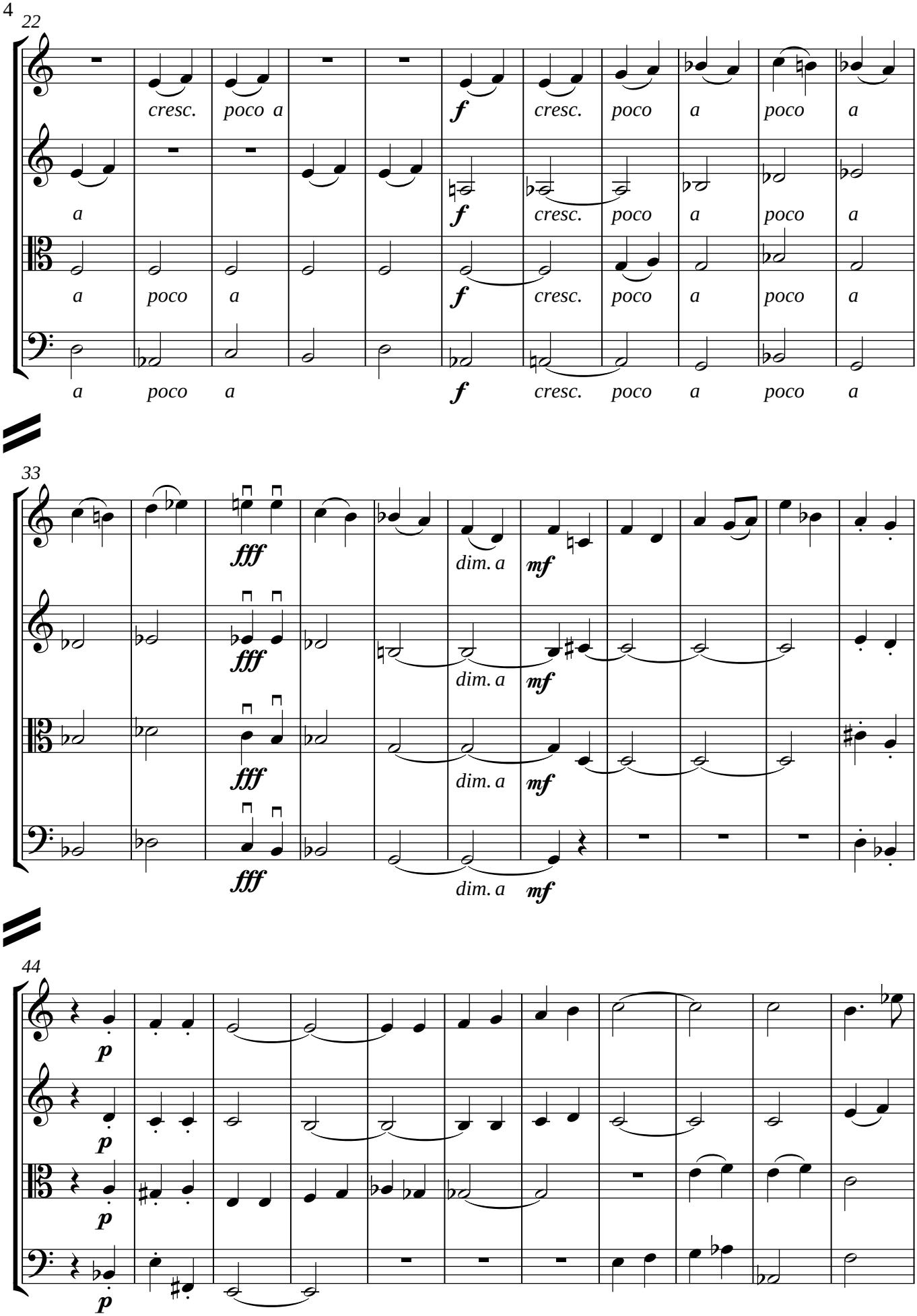
Peter Dyson

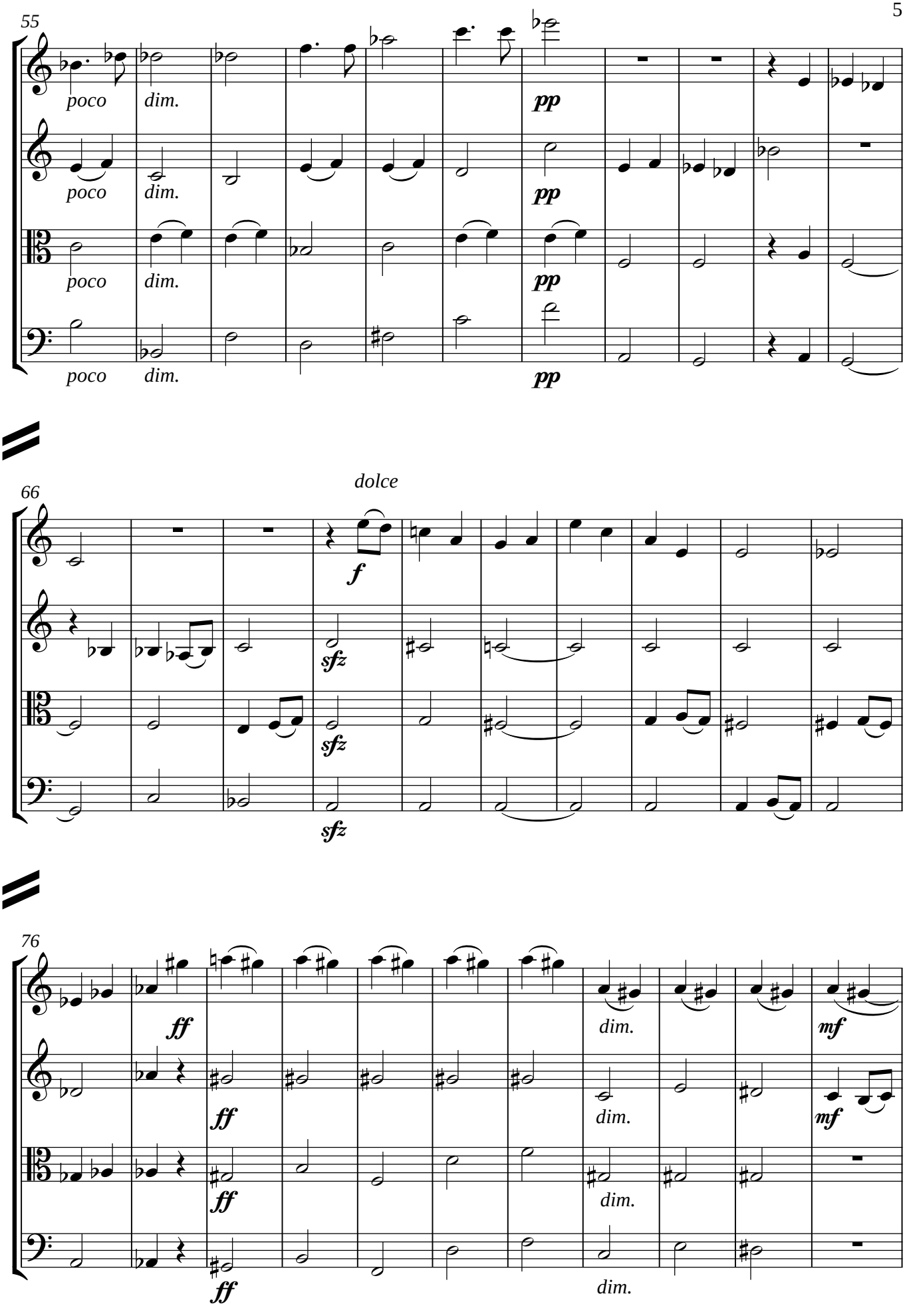
Andante triste e tranquillo (♩ = 52)



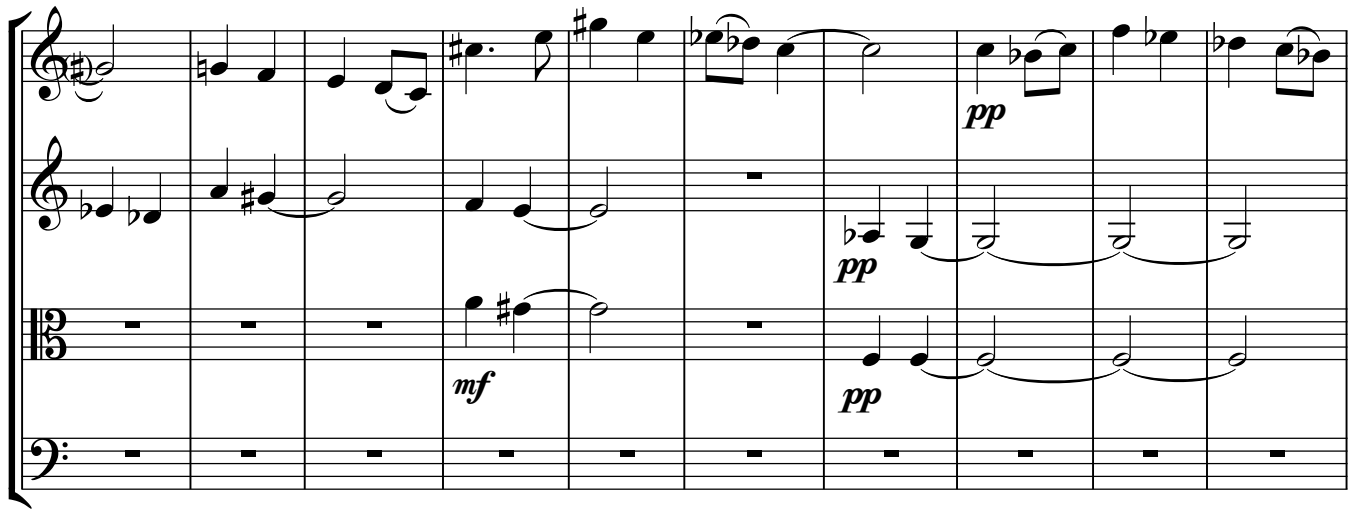


© Copyright 1980 Peter Dyson
Licensed under Creative Commons Attribution Non-commercial No Derivatives 3.0

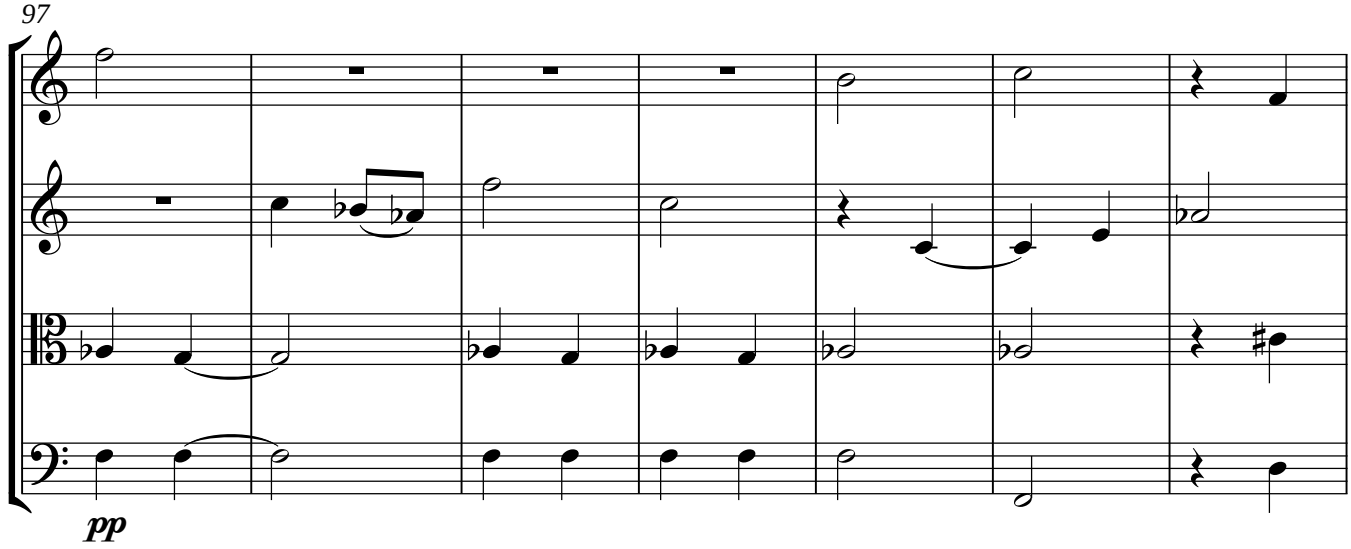

22
cresc. poco a
f
cresc. poco a poco a
a
a poco a
33
fff
dim. a
mf
44
p


55
poco
dim.
pp
66
dolce
f
sfz
76
ff
dim.
mf

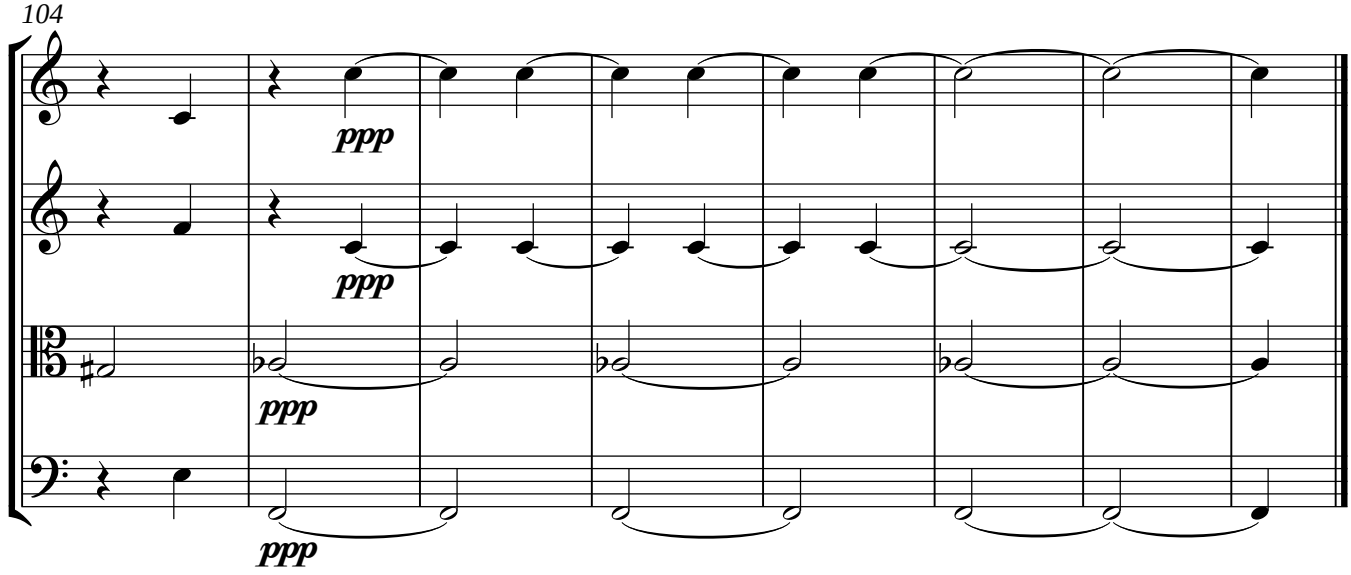
87



97

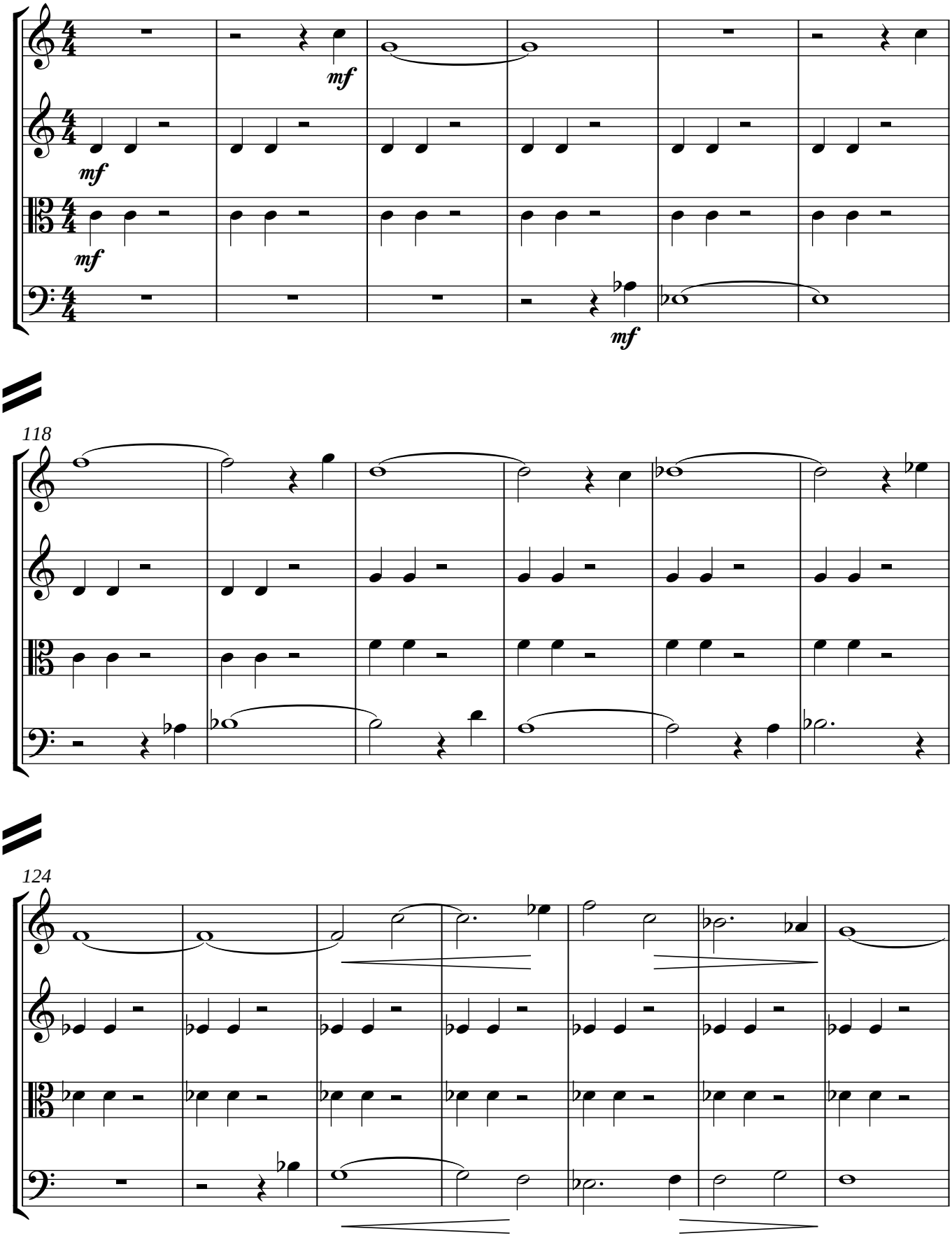


104

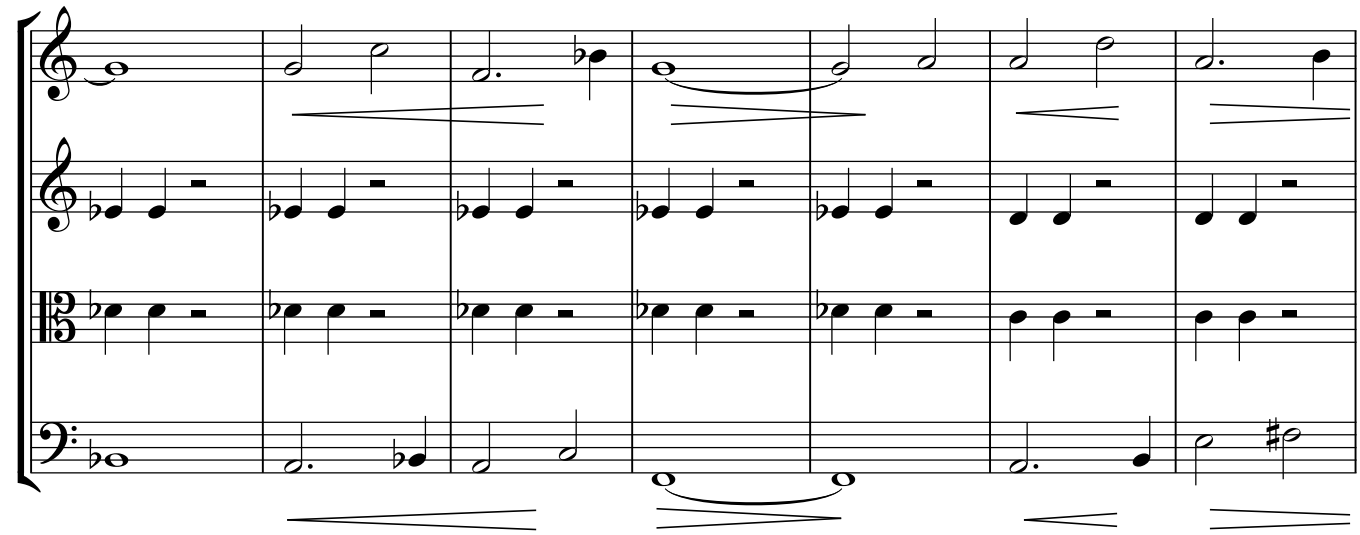


Second Statement

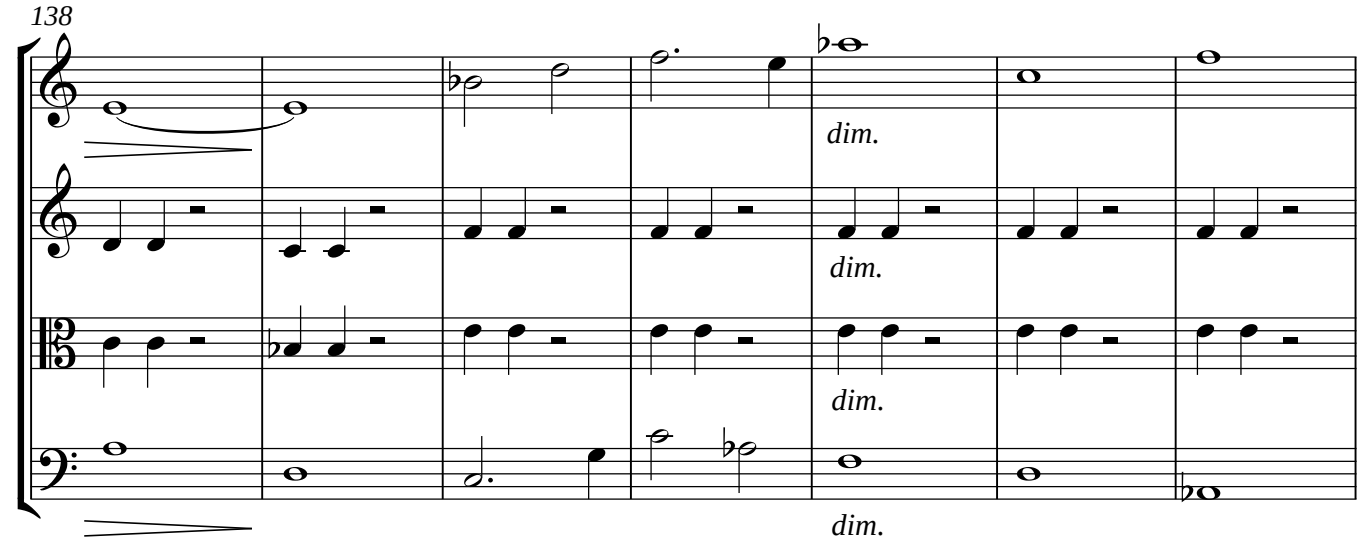
112 **Allegro lyrico** (♩ = 200)



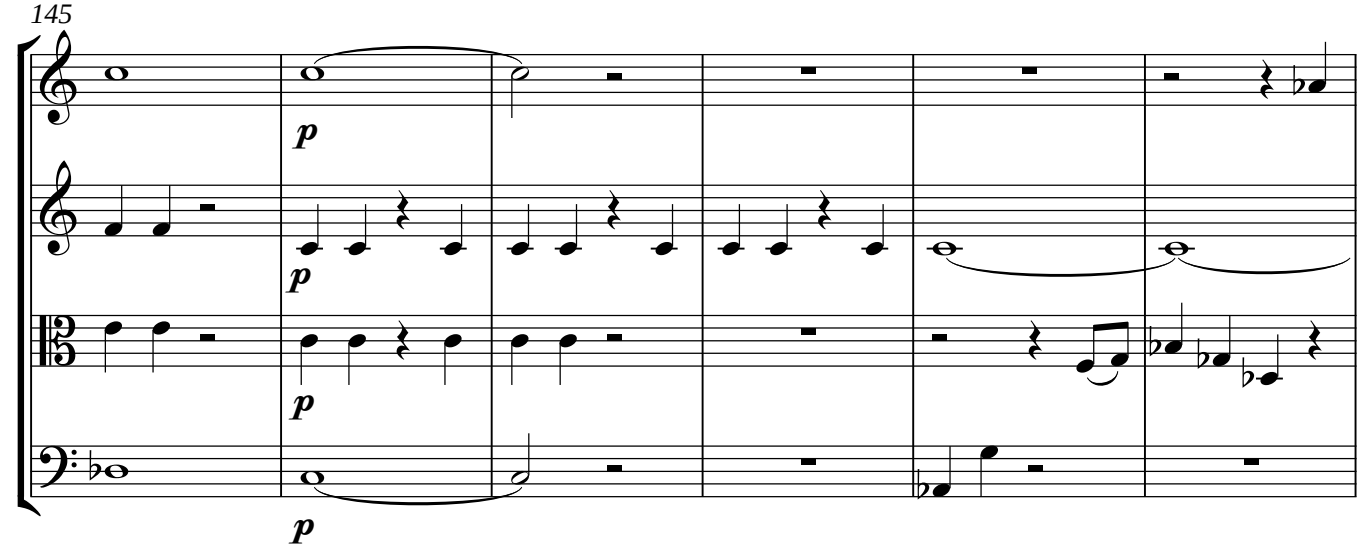
131



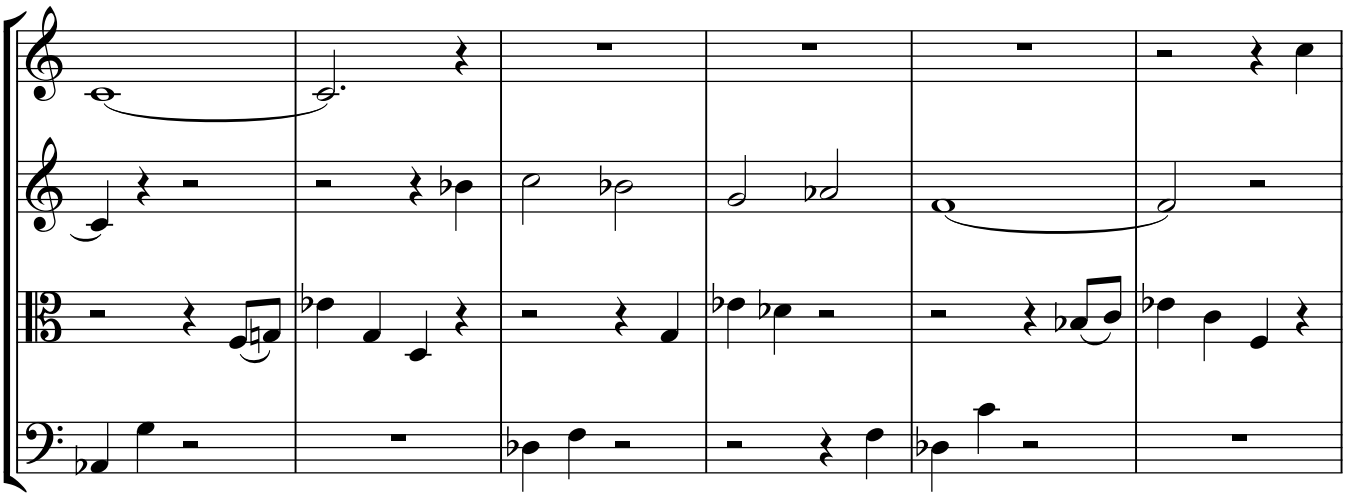
138



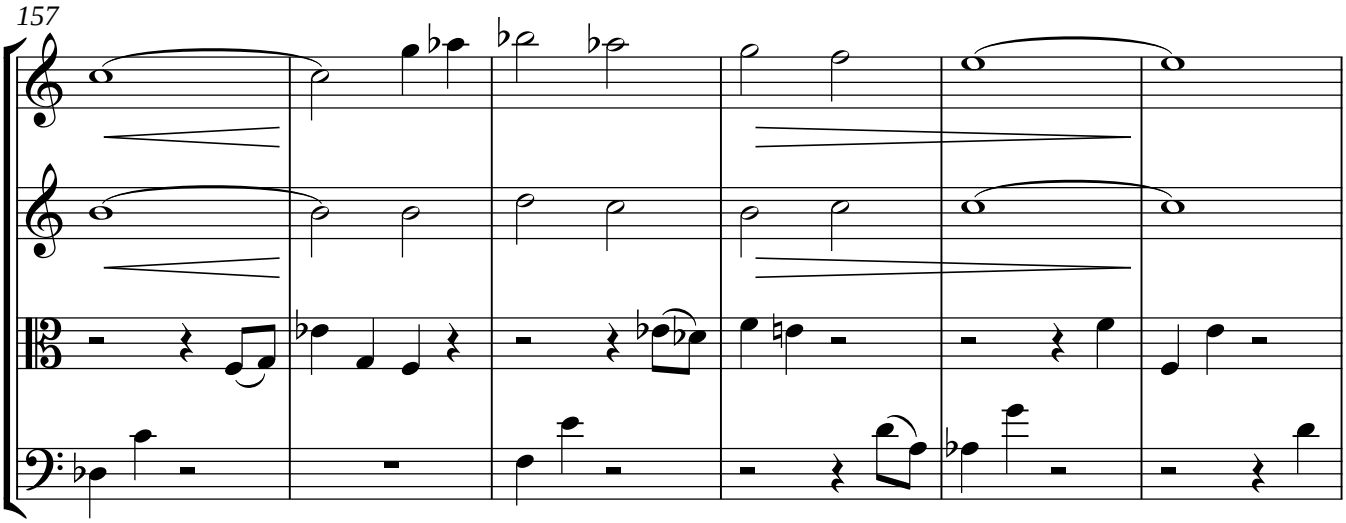
145



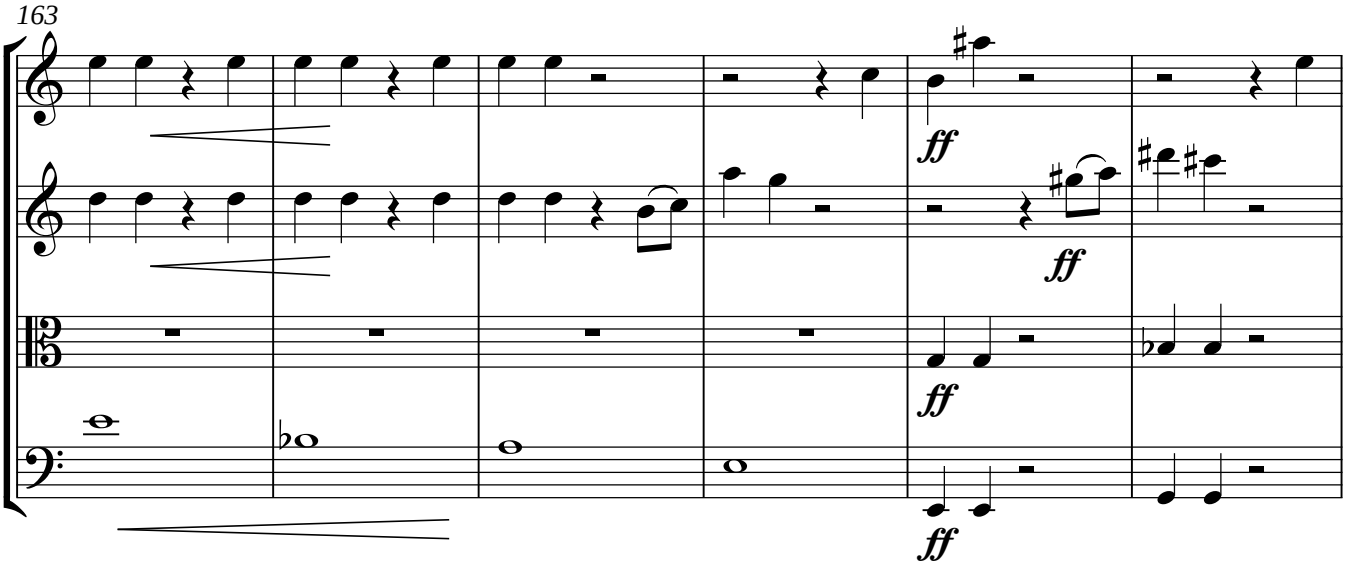
151



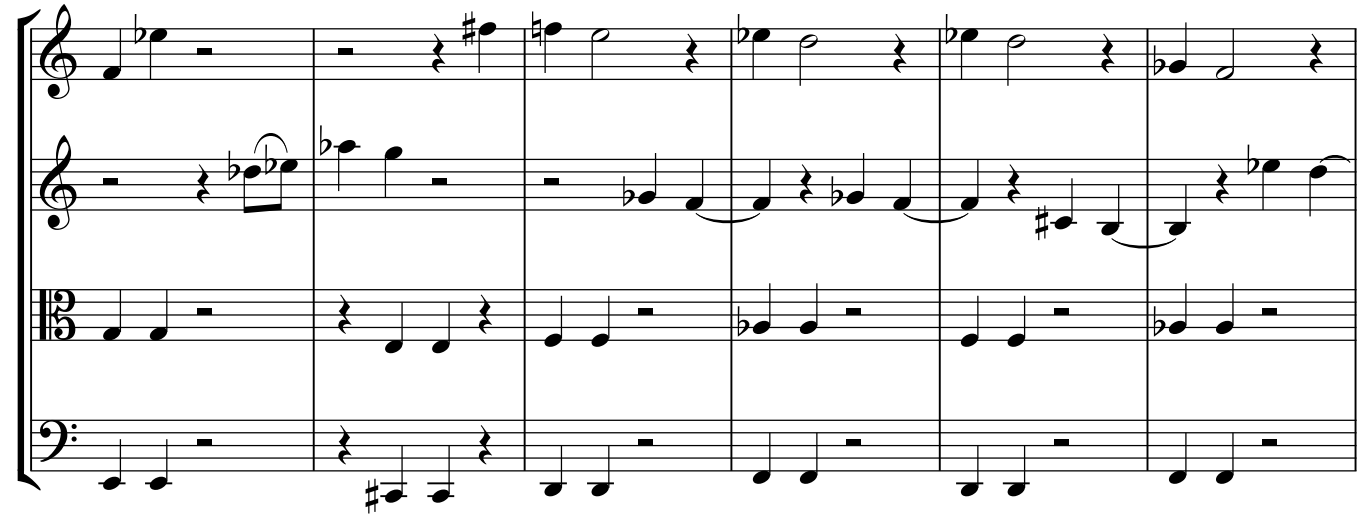
157



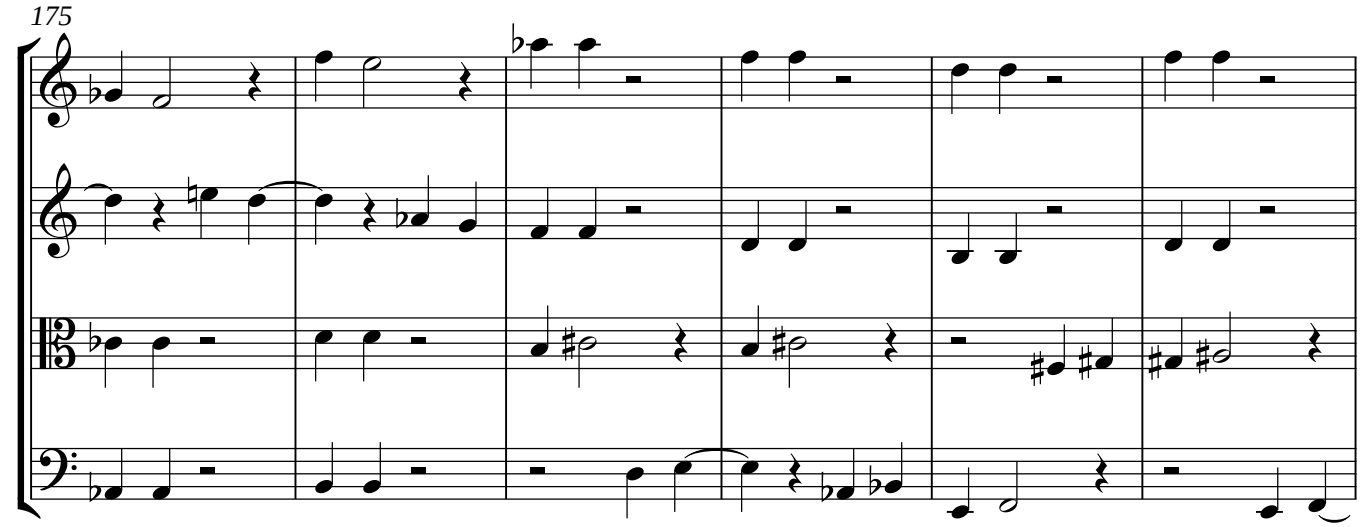
163



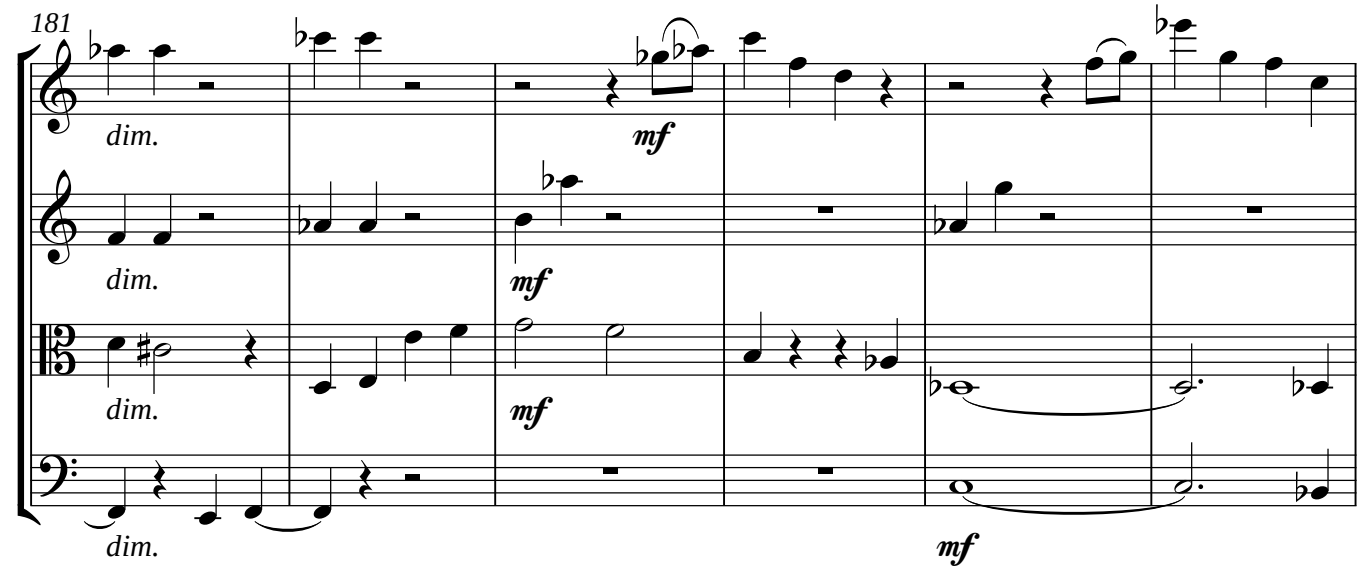
169



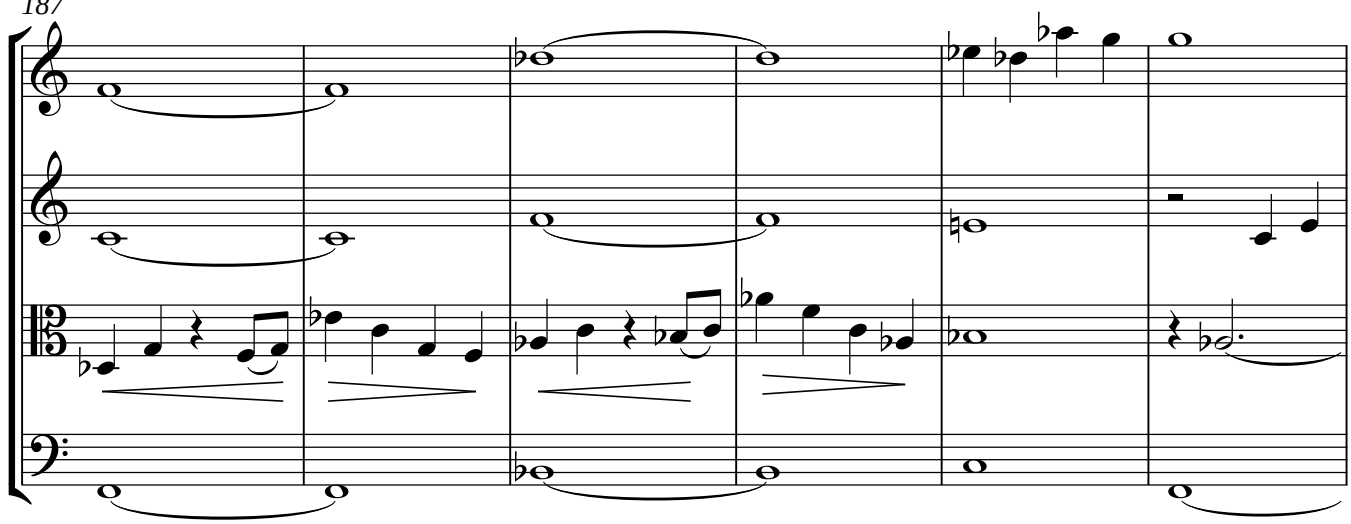
175



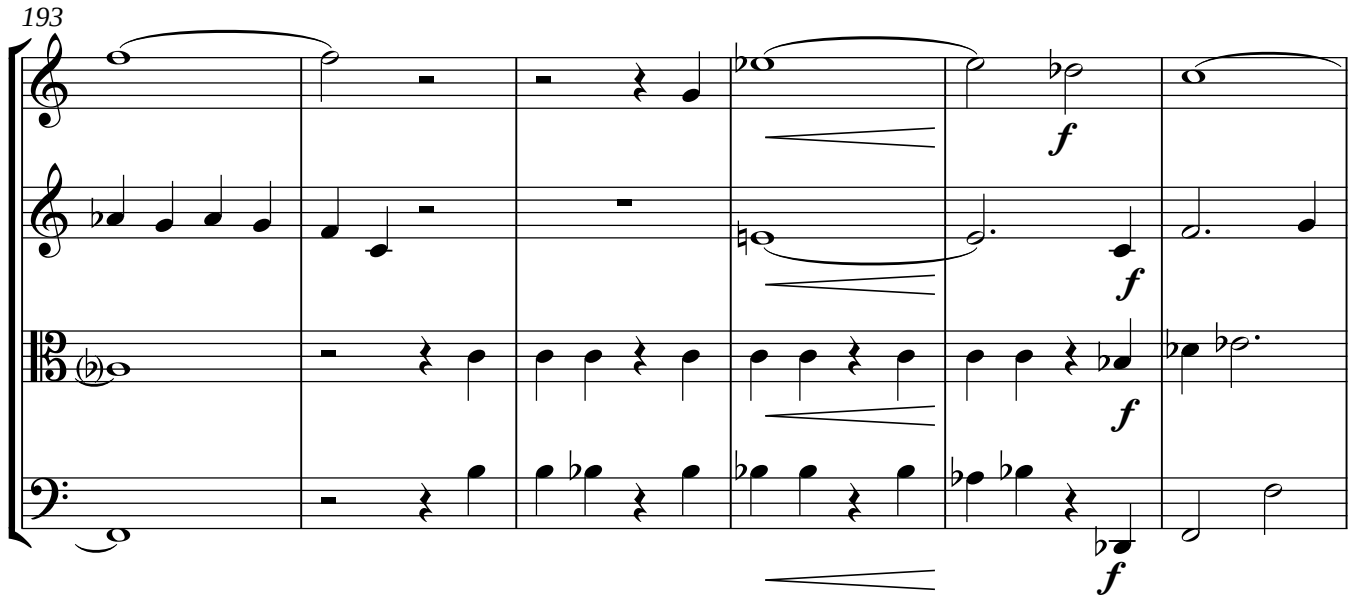
181



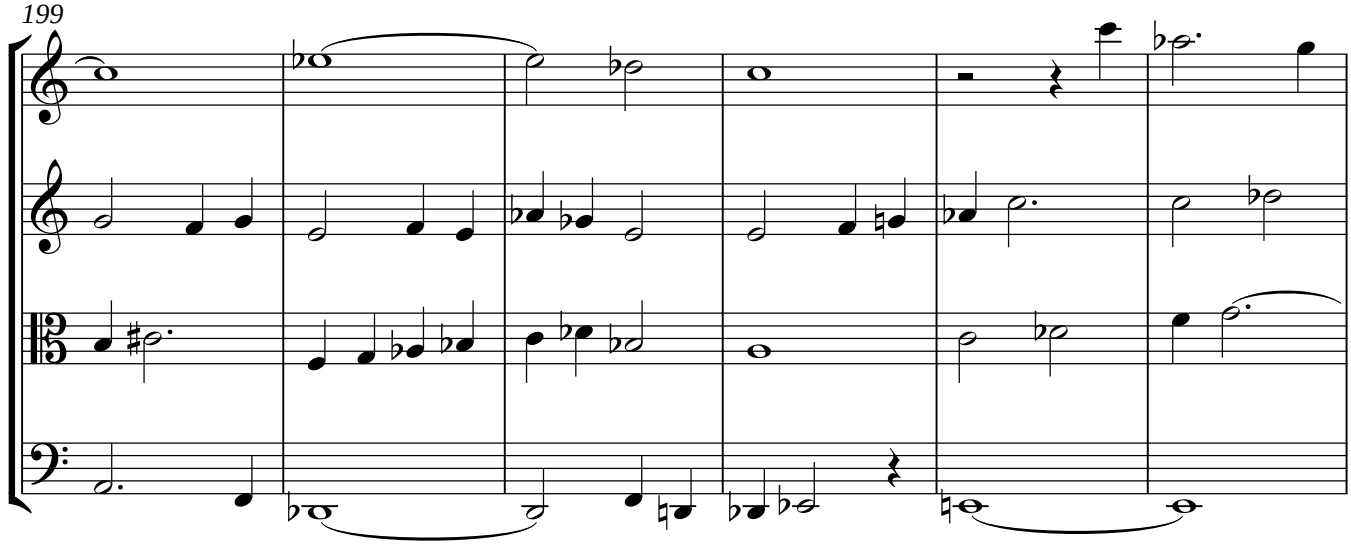
187



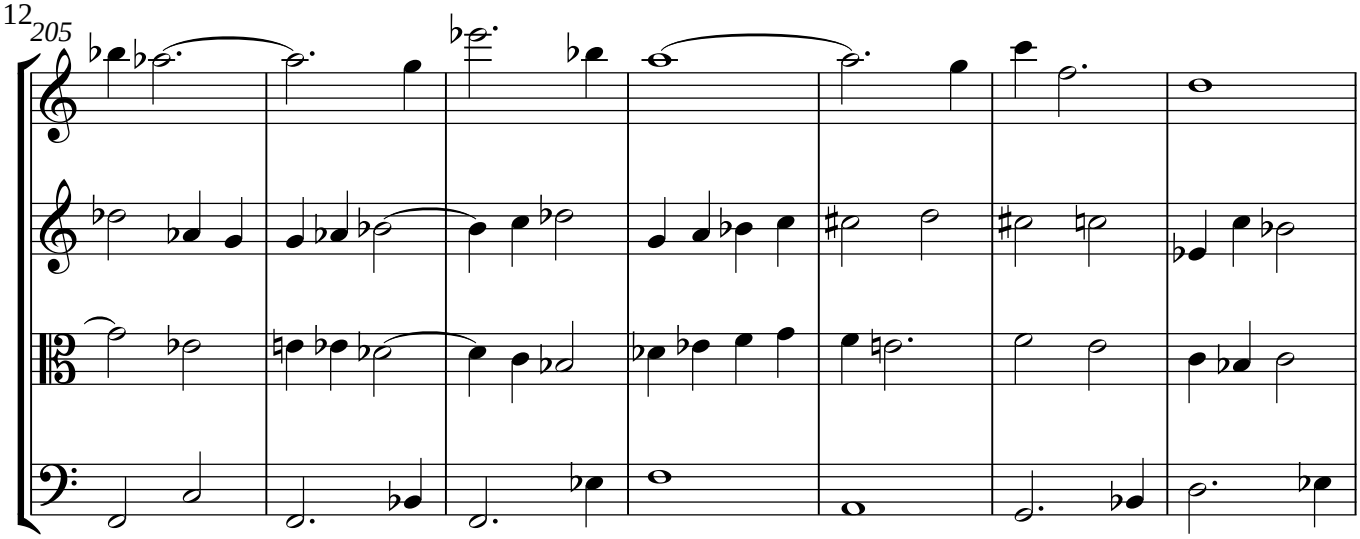
193



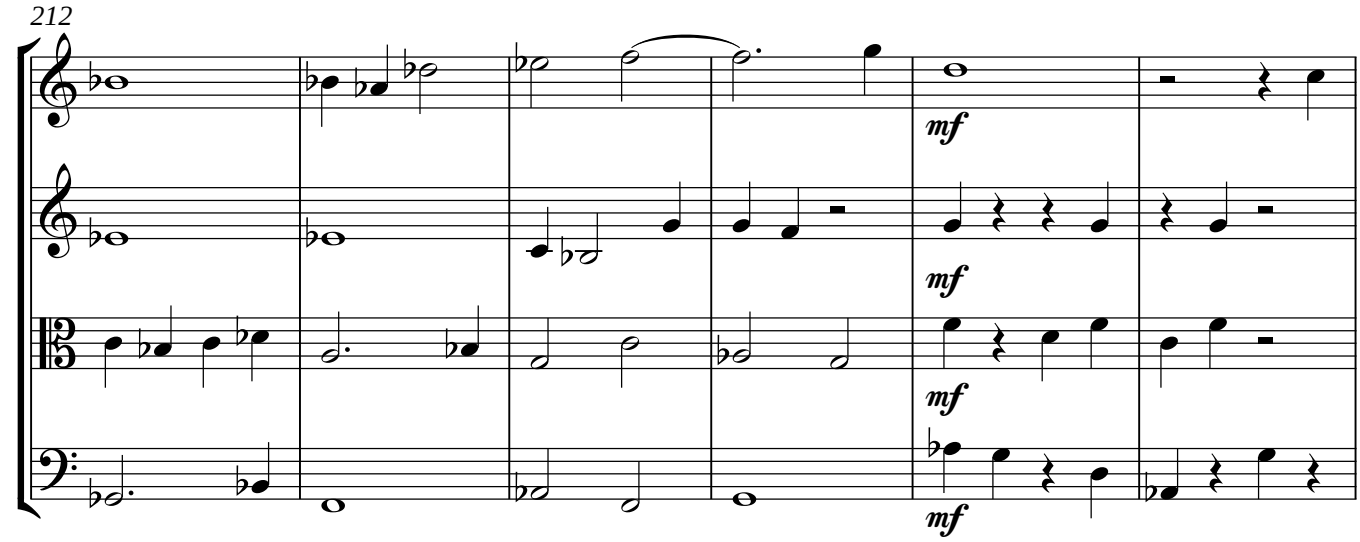
199



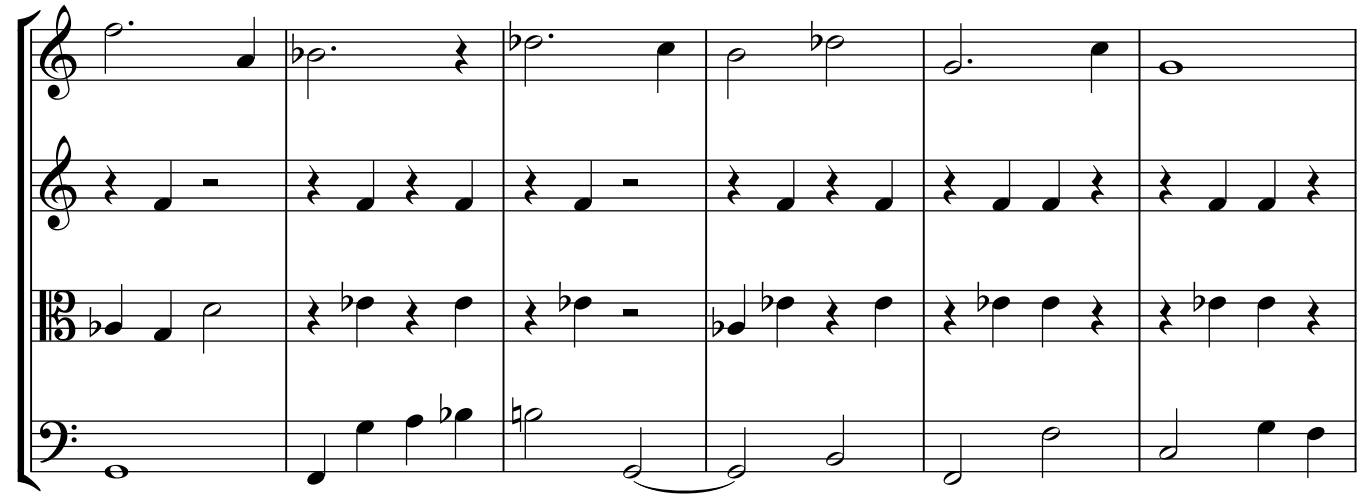
205



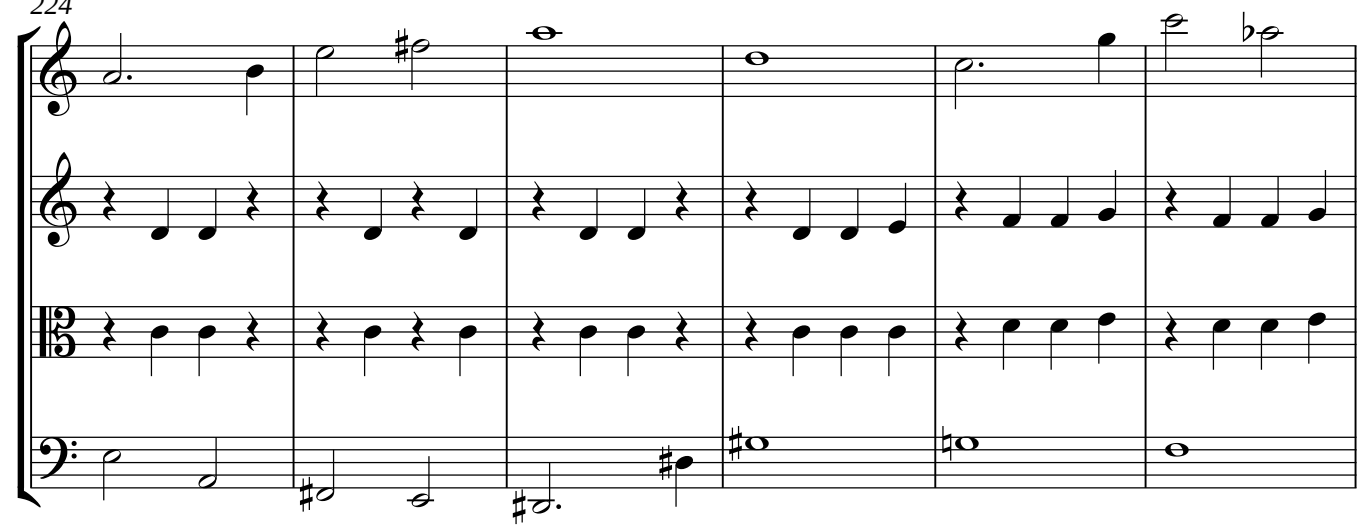
212



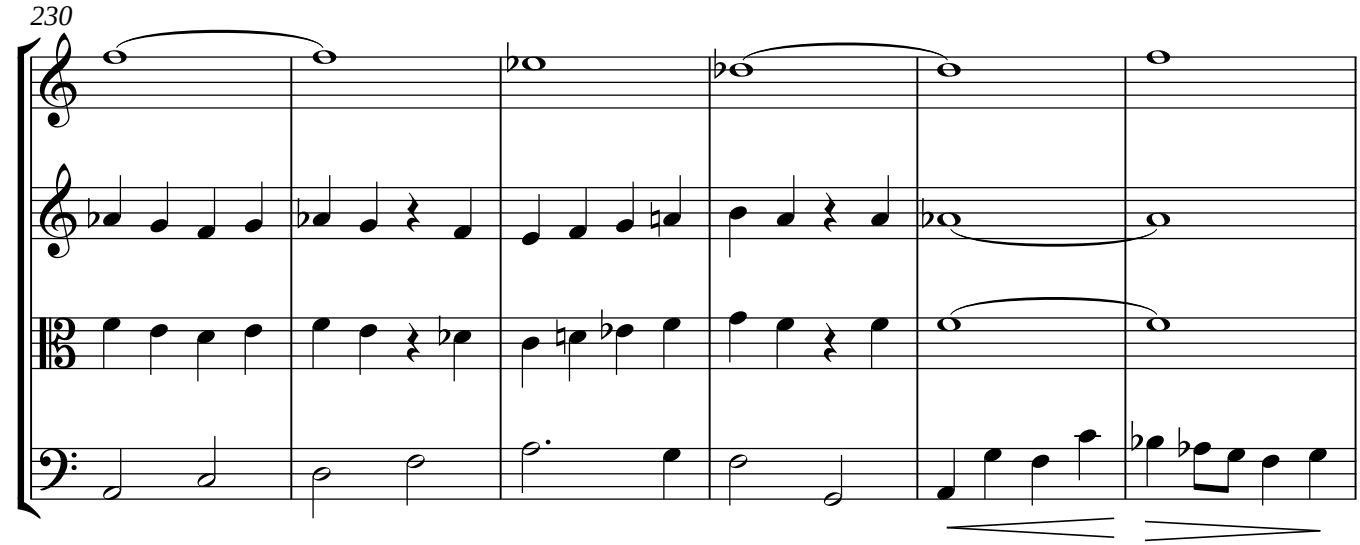
218



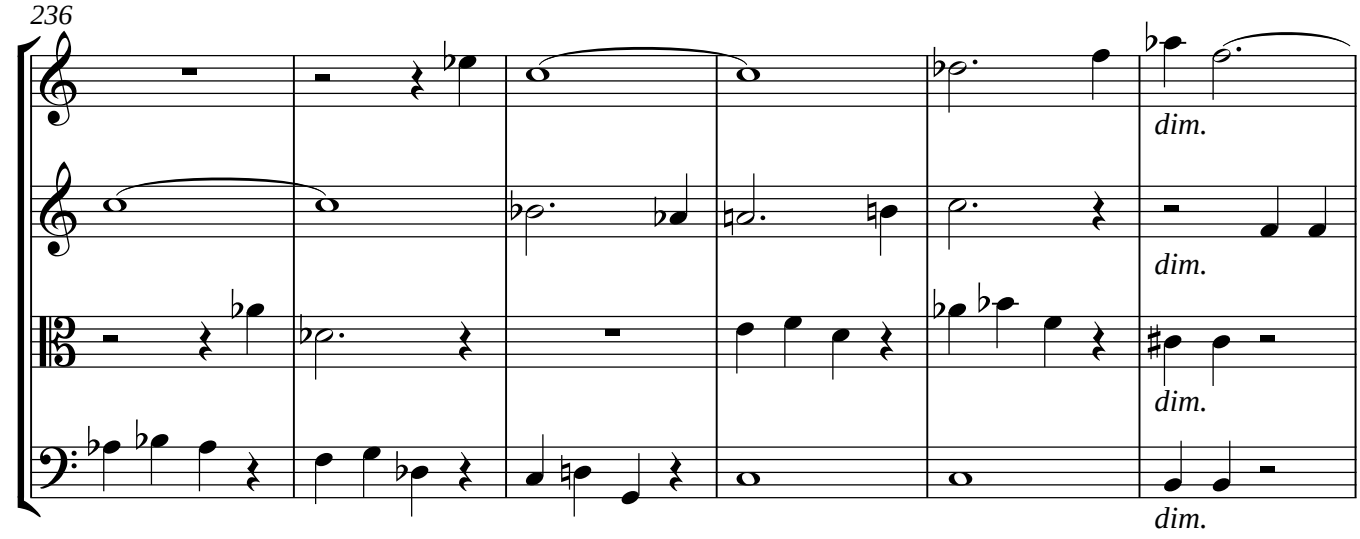
224

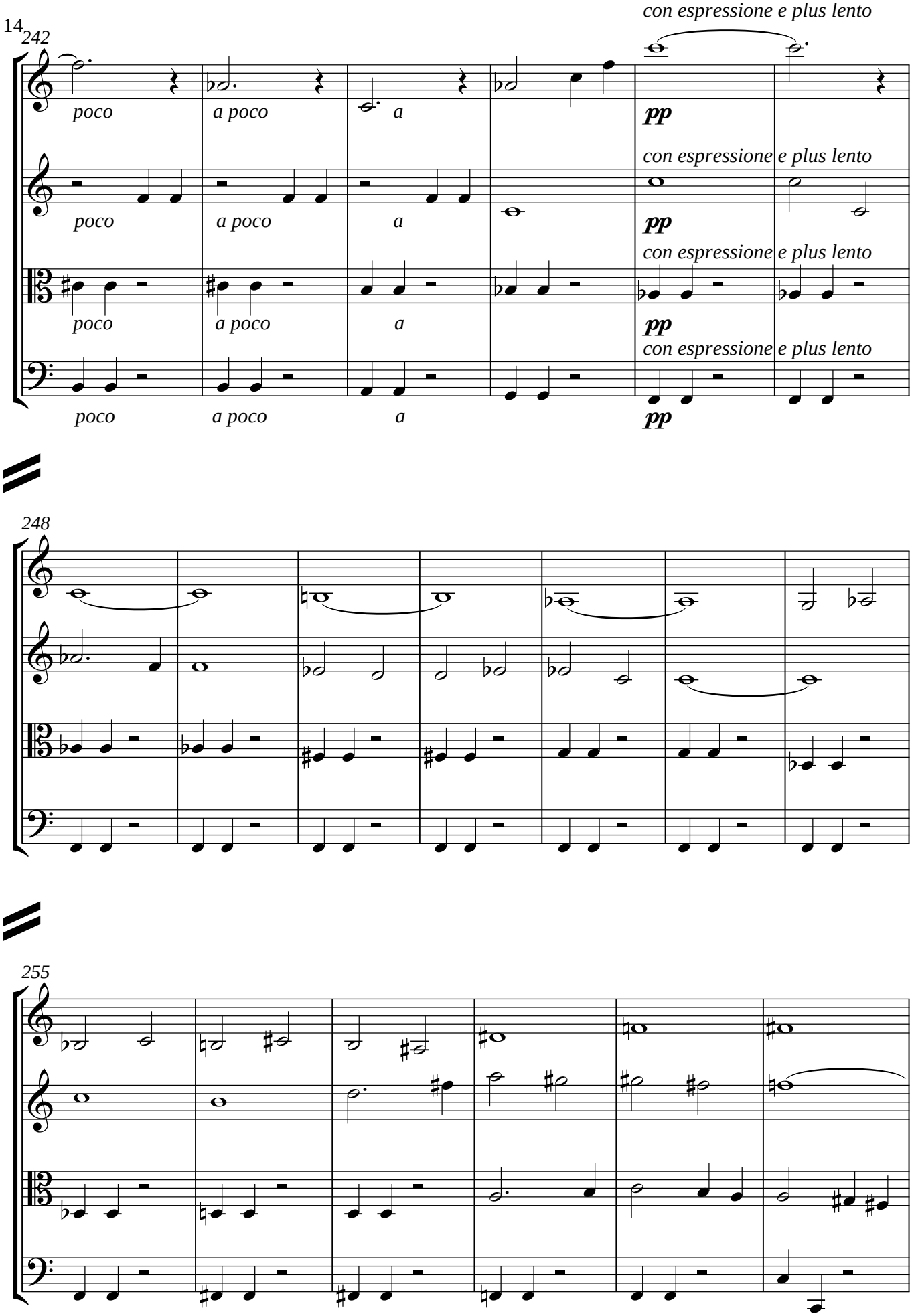


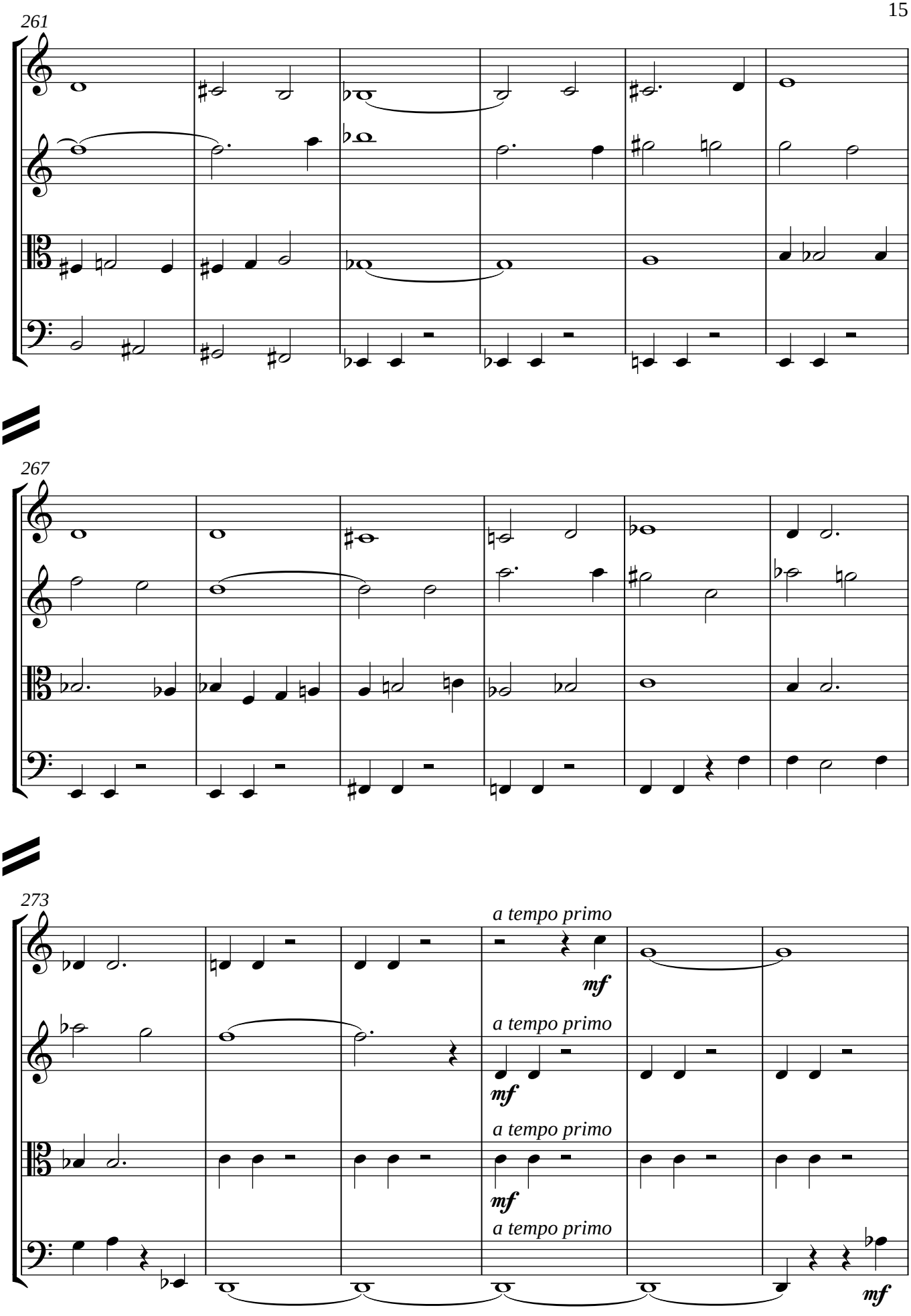
230



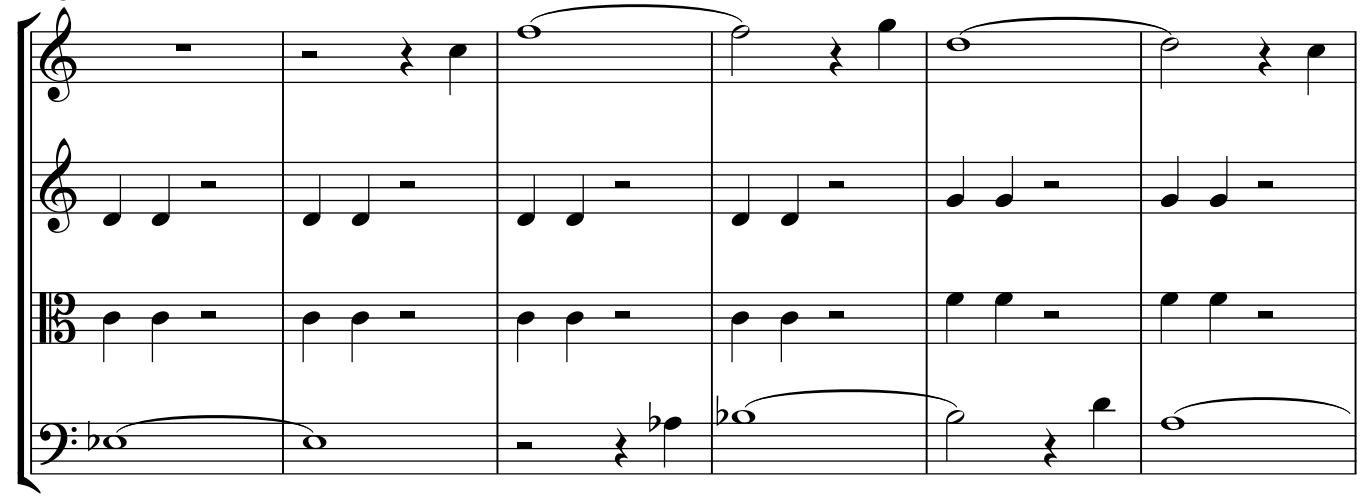
236



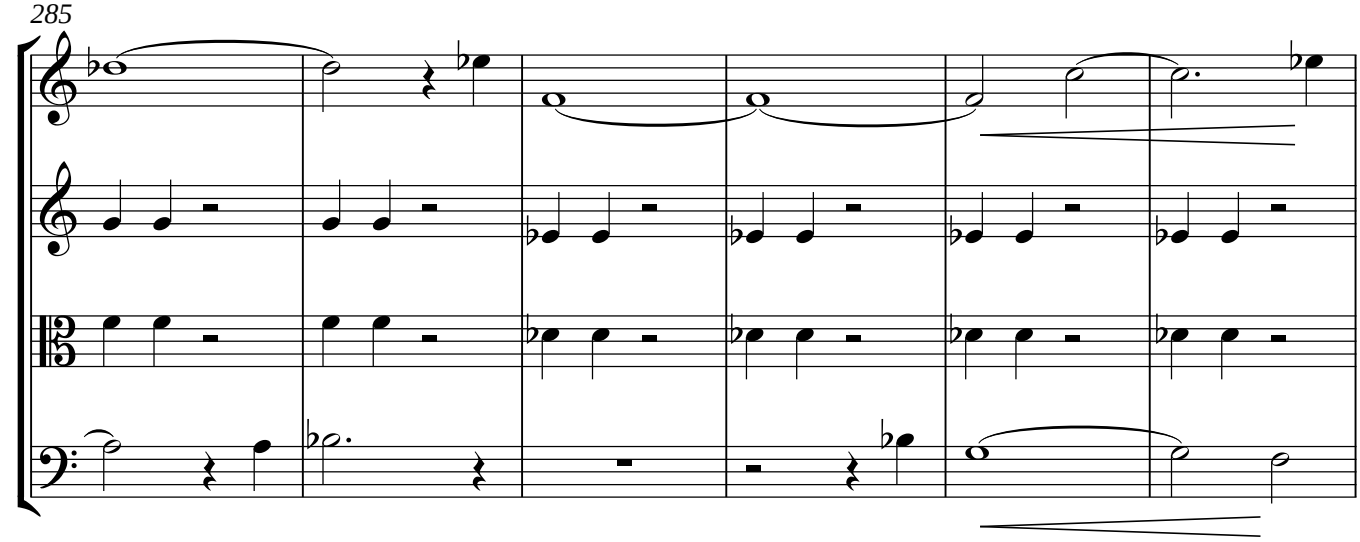

242
poco
a poco
a
con espressione e plus lento
pp
248
255


261
267
273
a tempo primo
mf
a tempo primo
mf
a tempo primo
mf
a tempo primo
mf

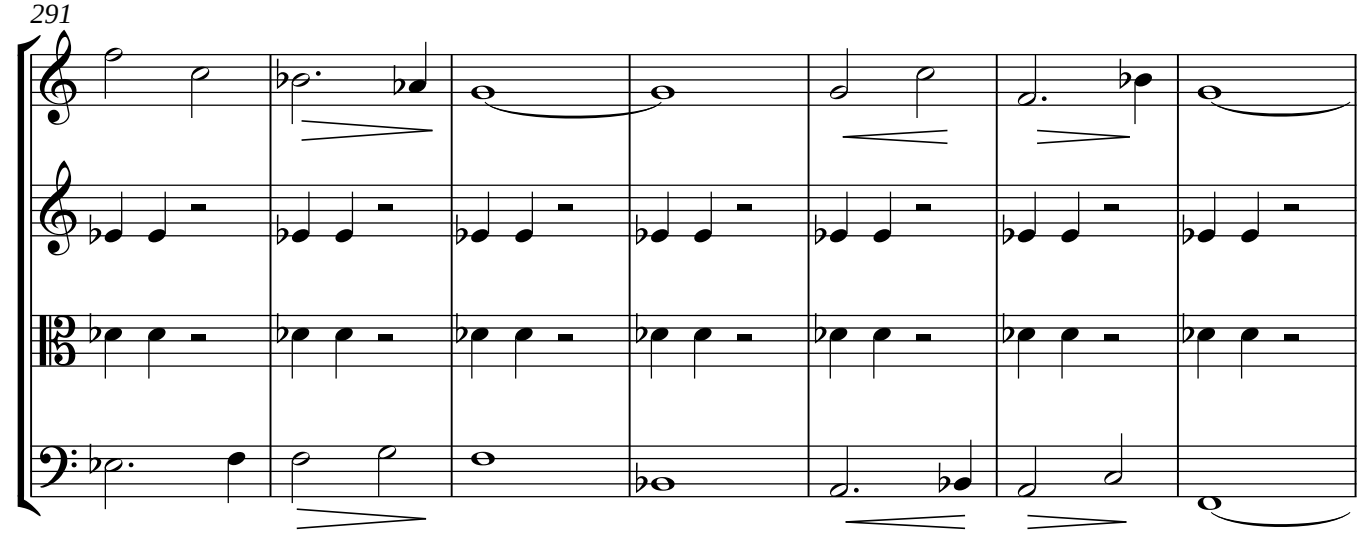
279



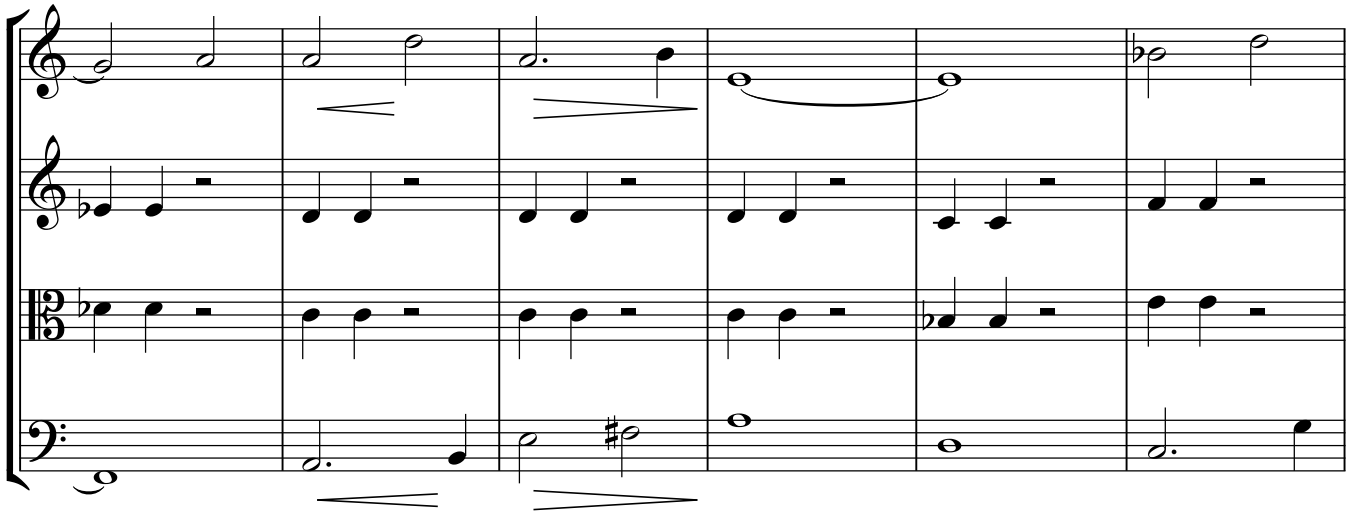
285



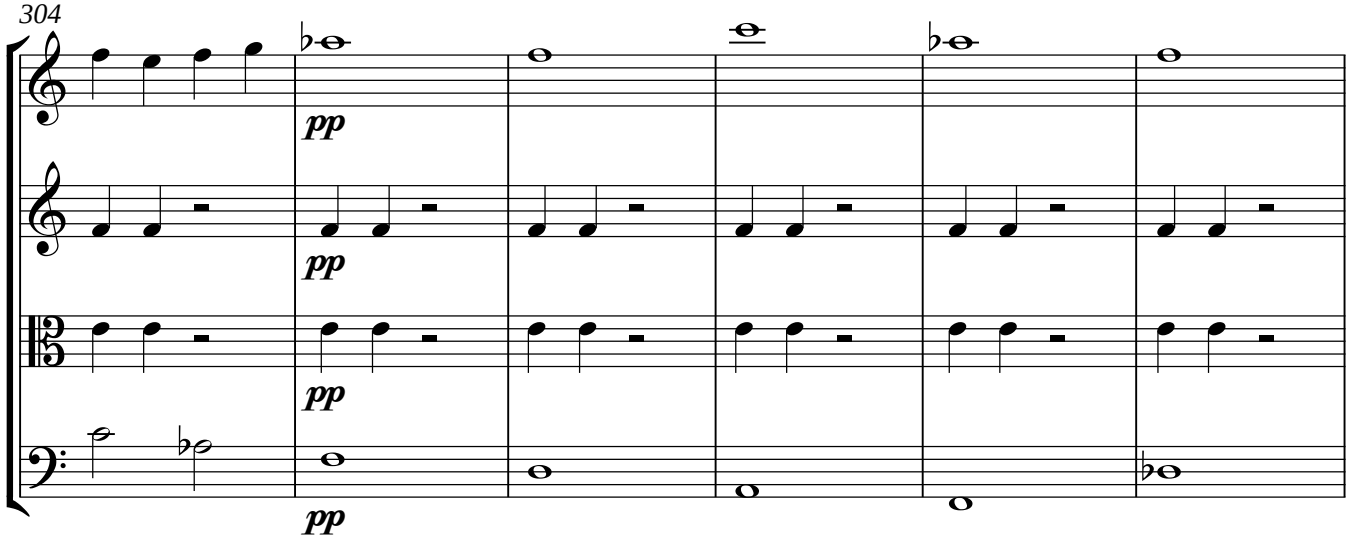
291



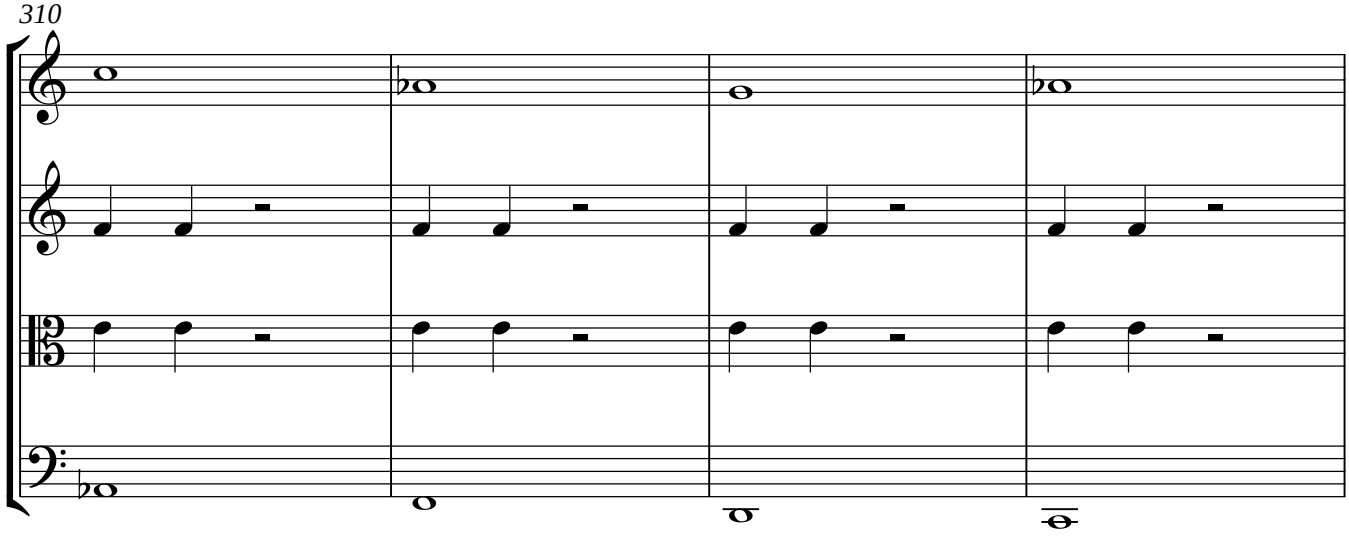
298



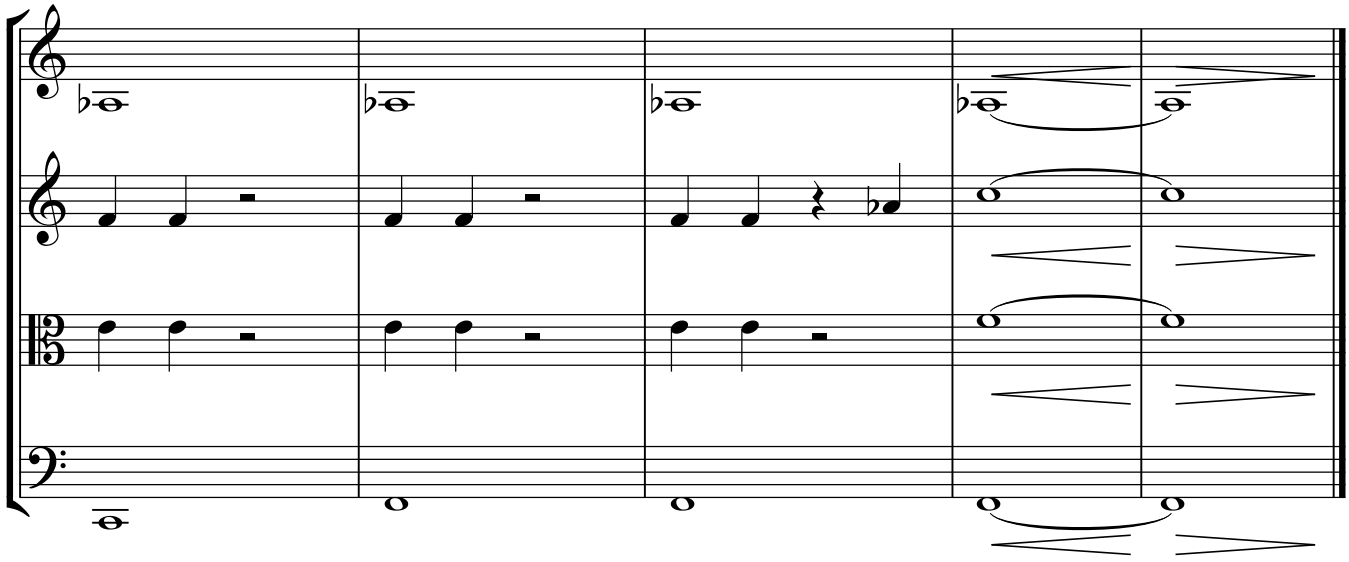
304



310

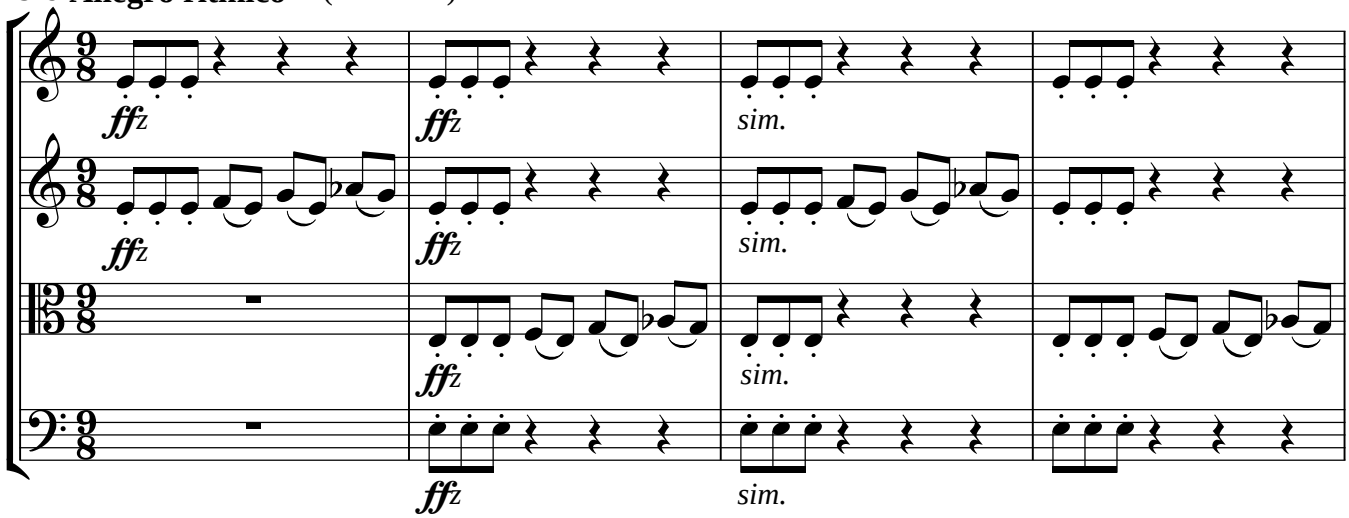


314

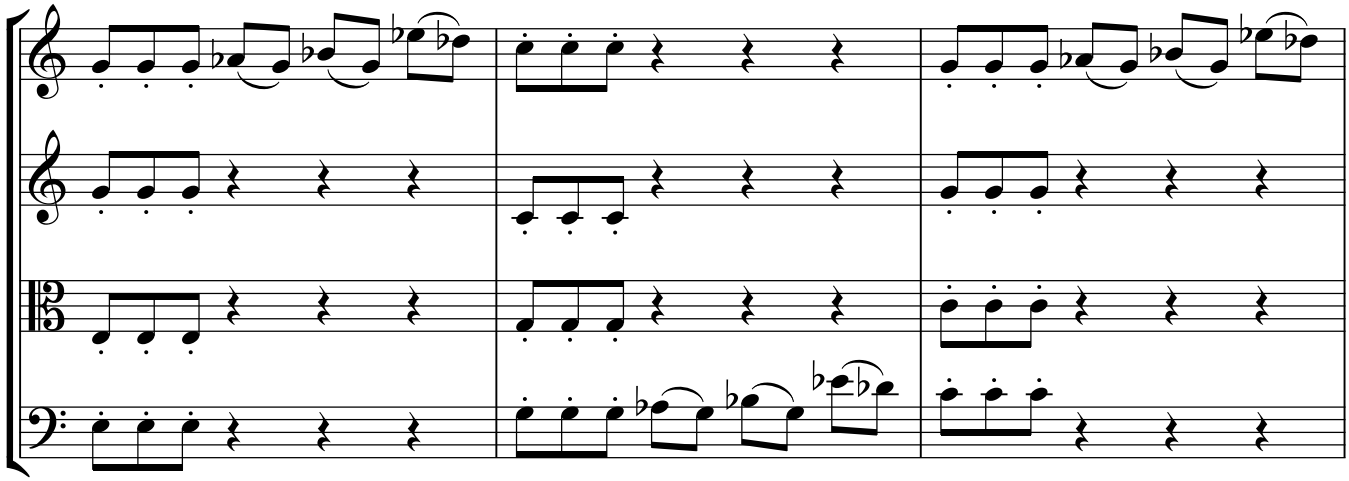


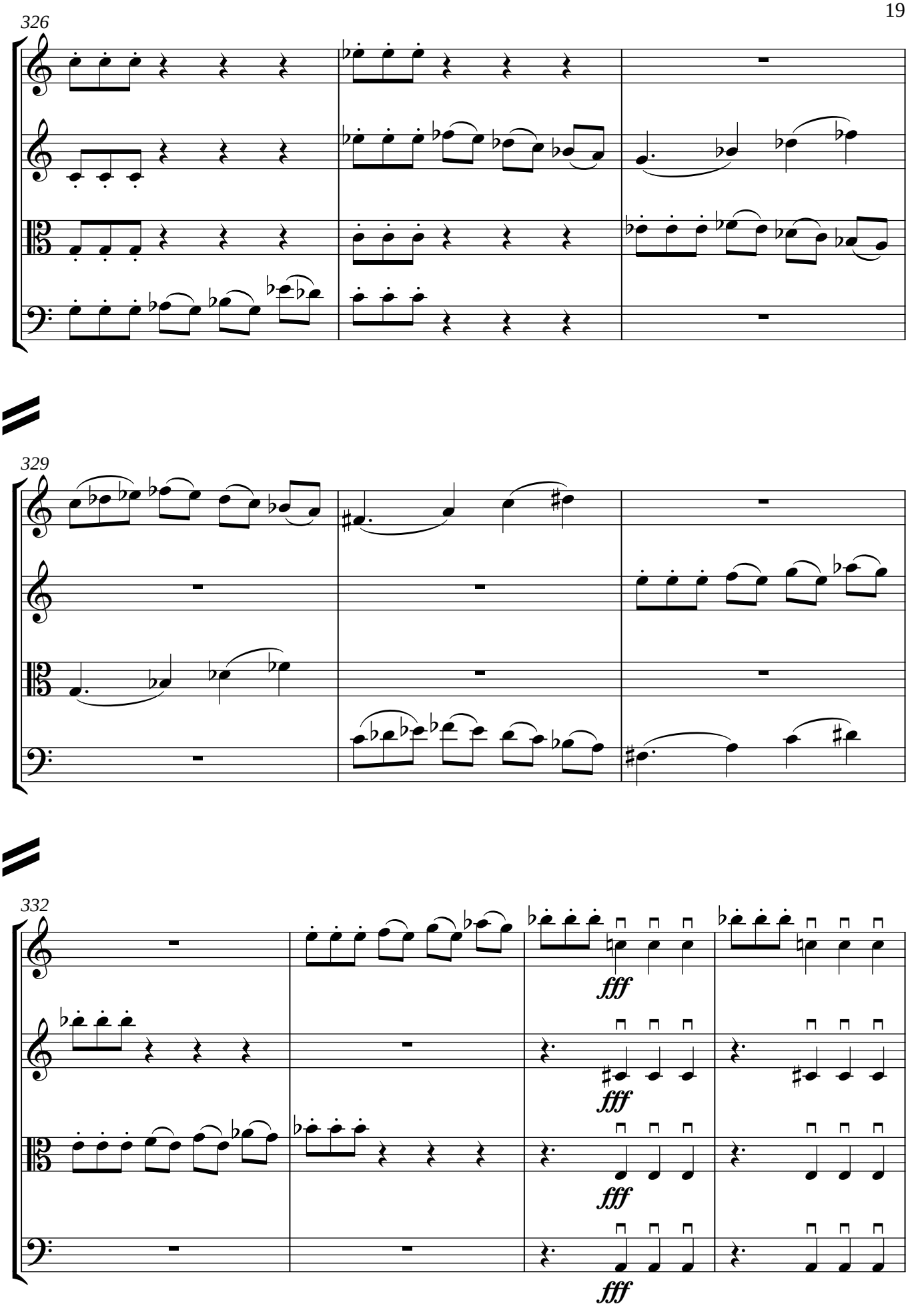
Third Statement

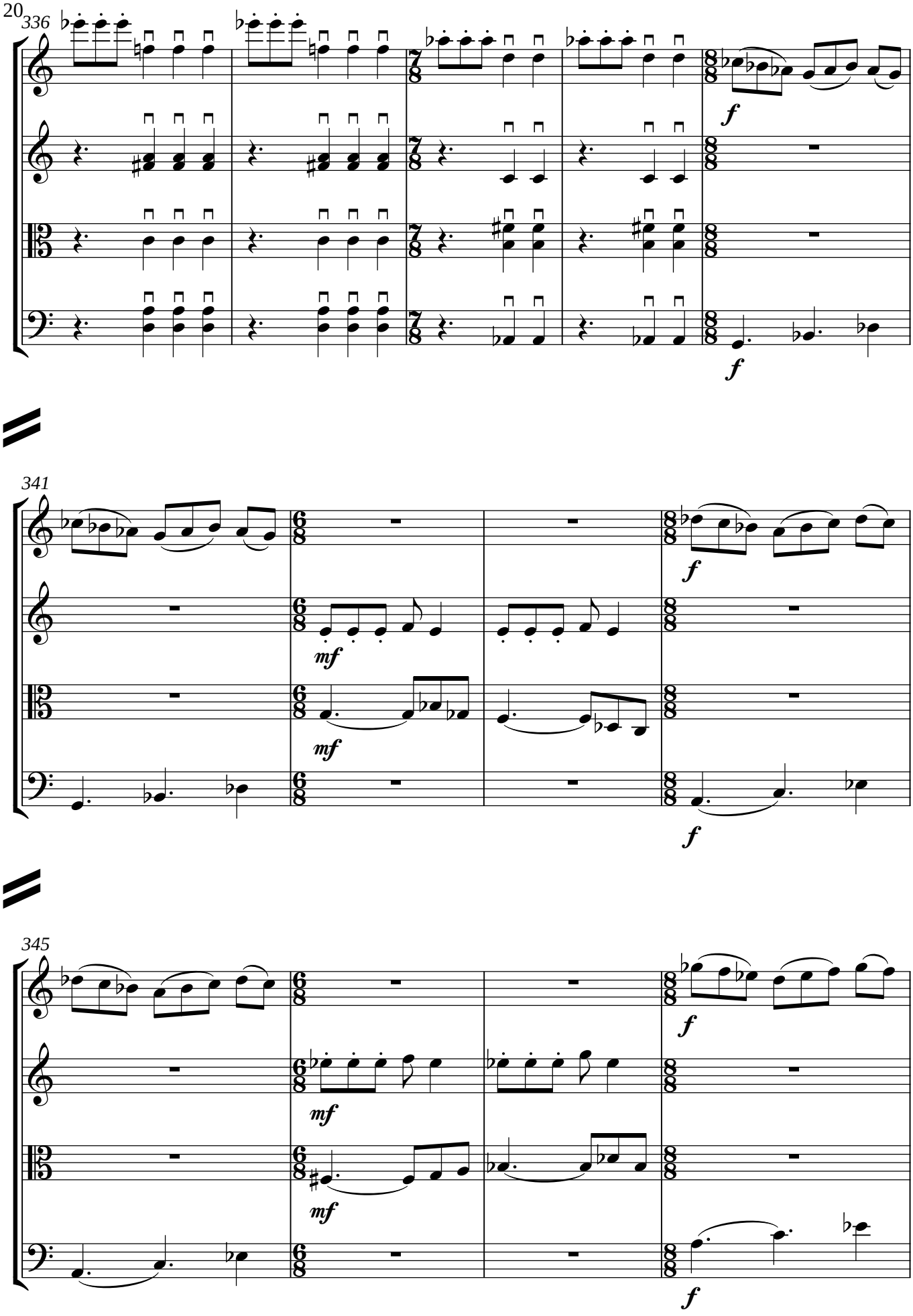
319 **Allegro ritmico** (♩ = 195)

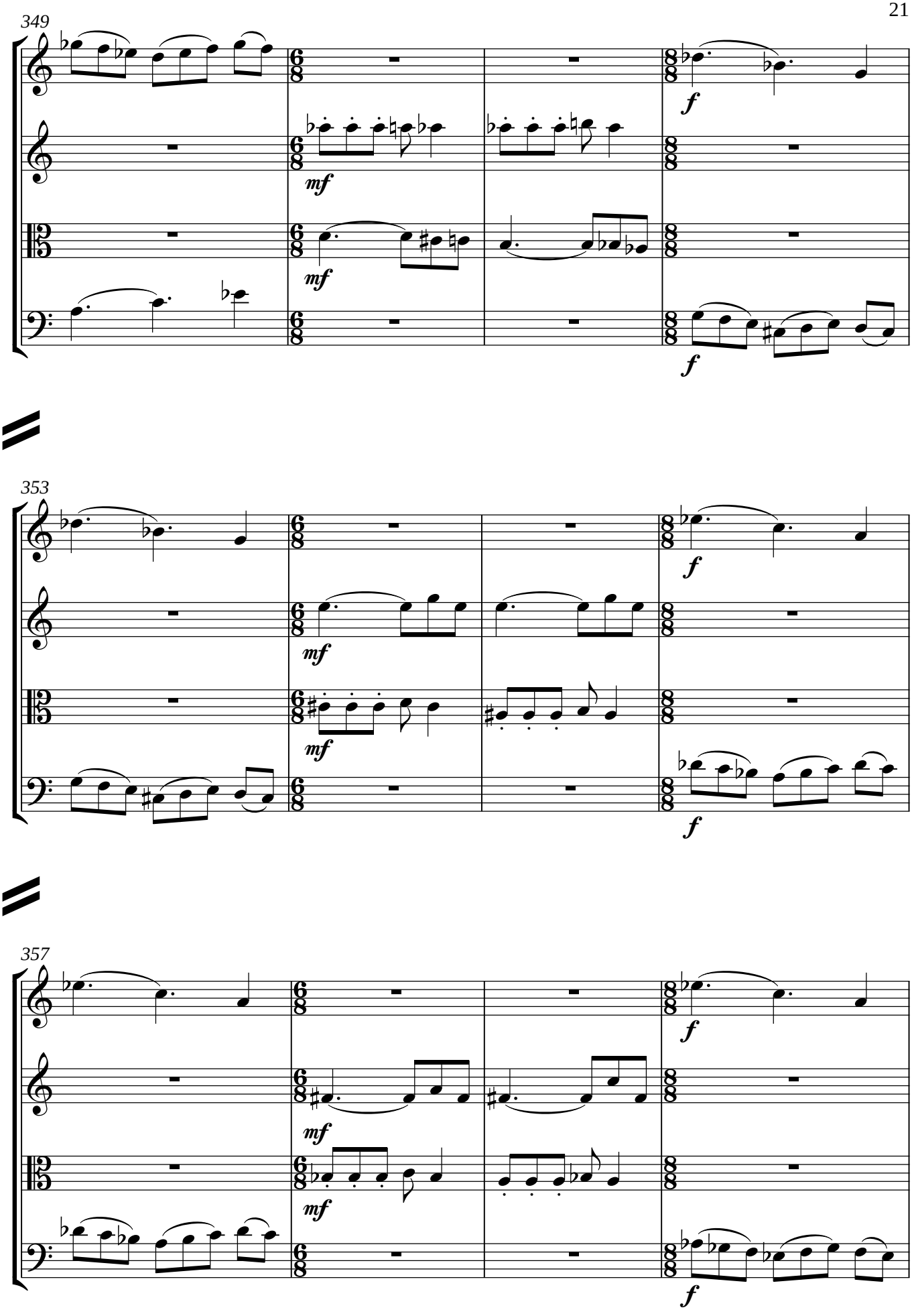


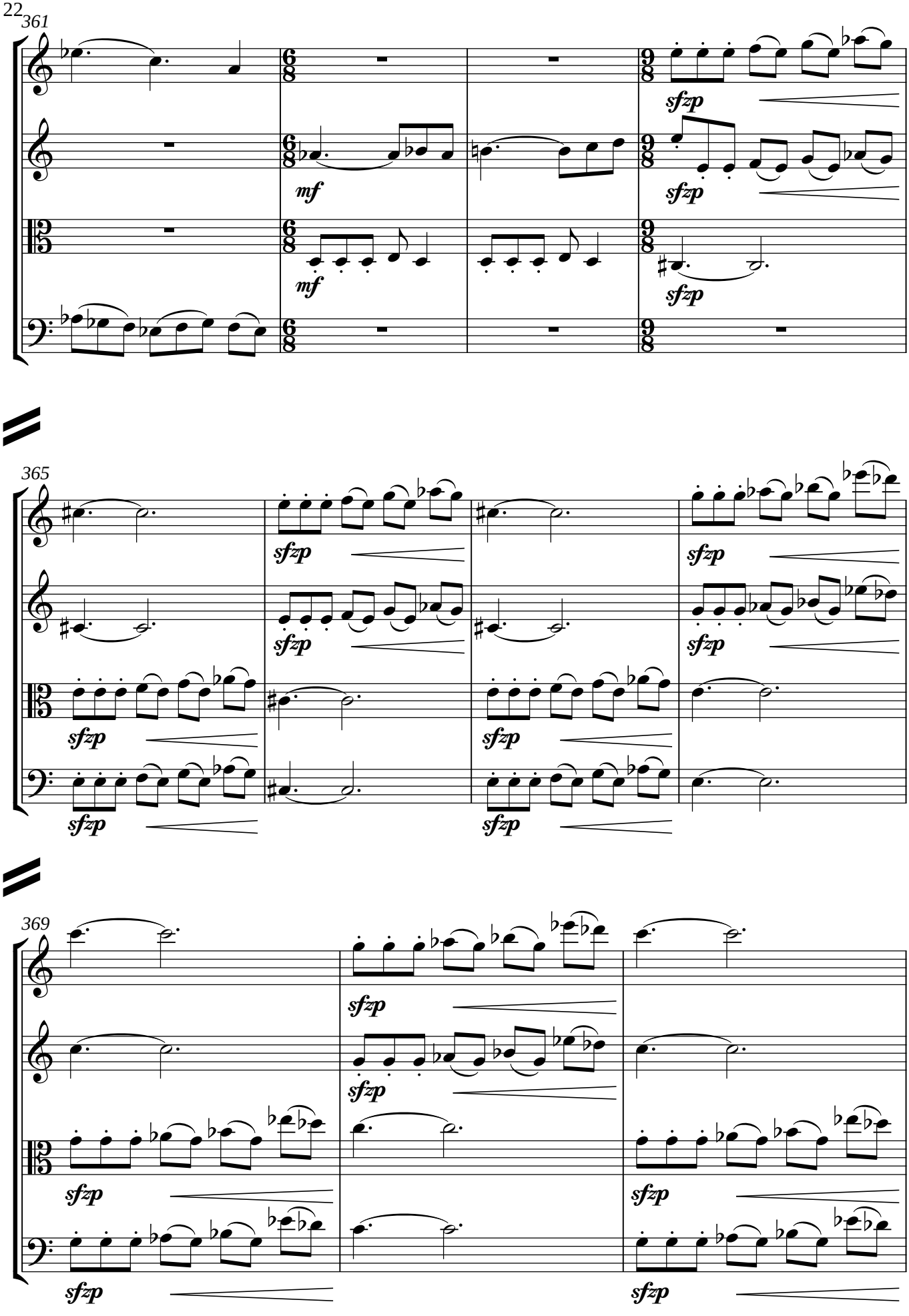
323

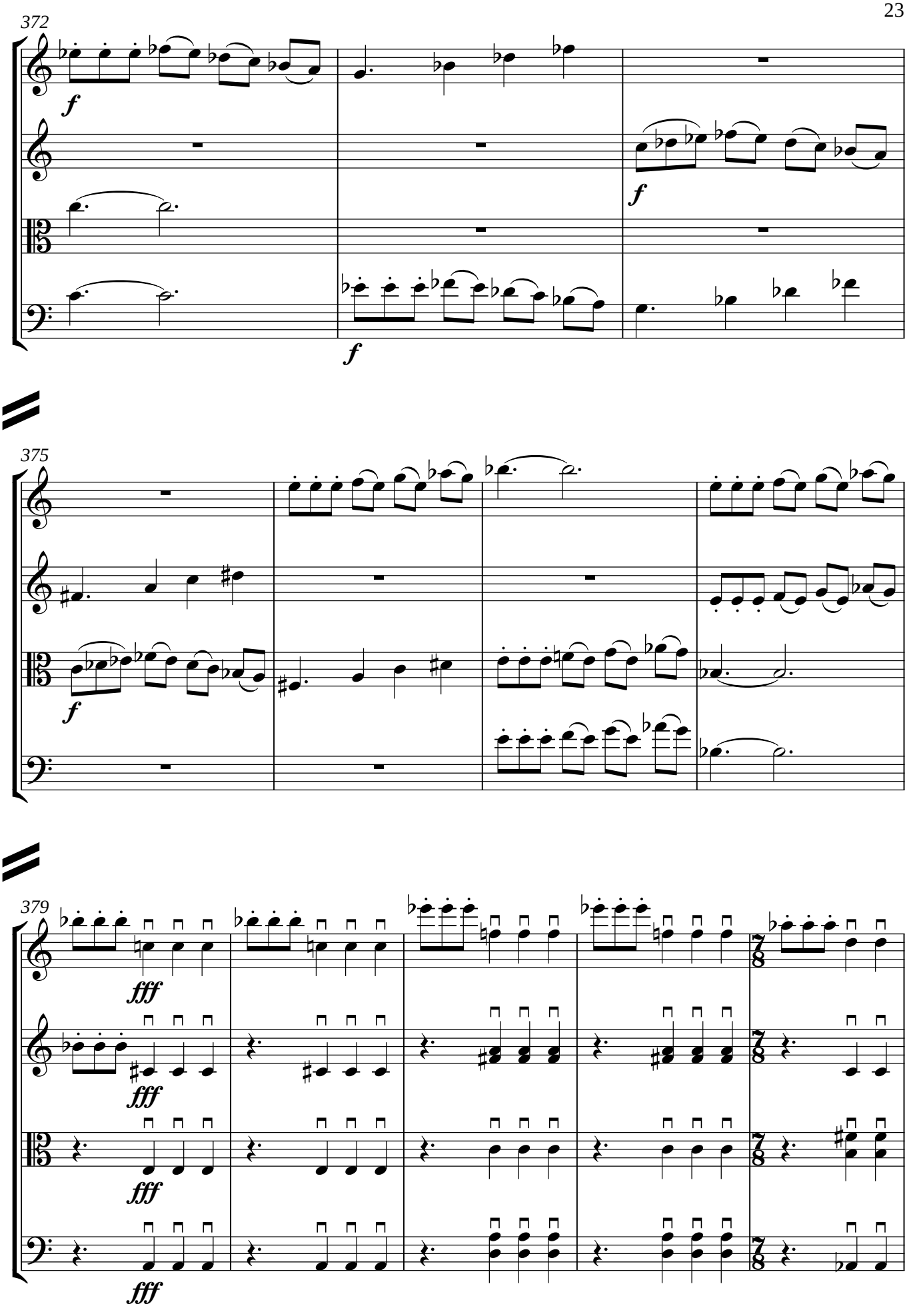


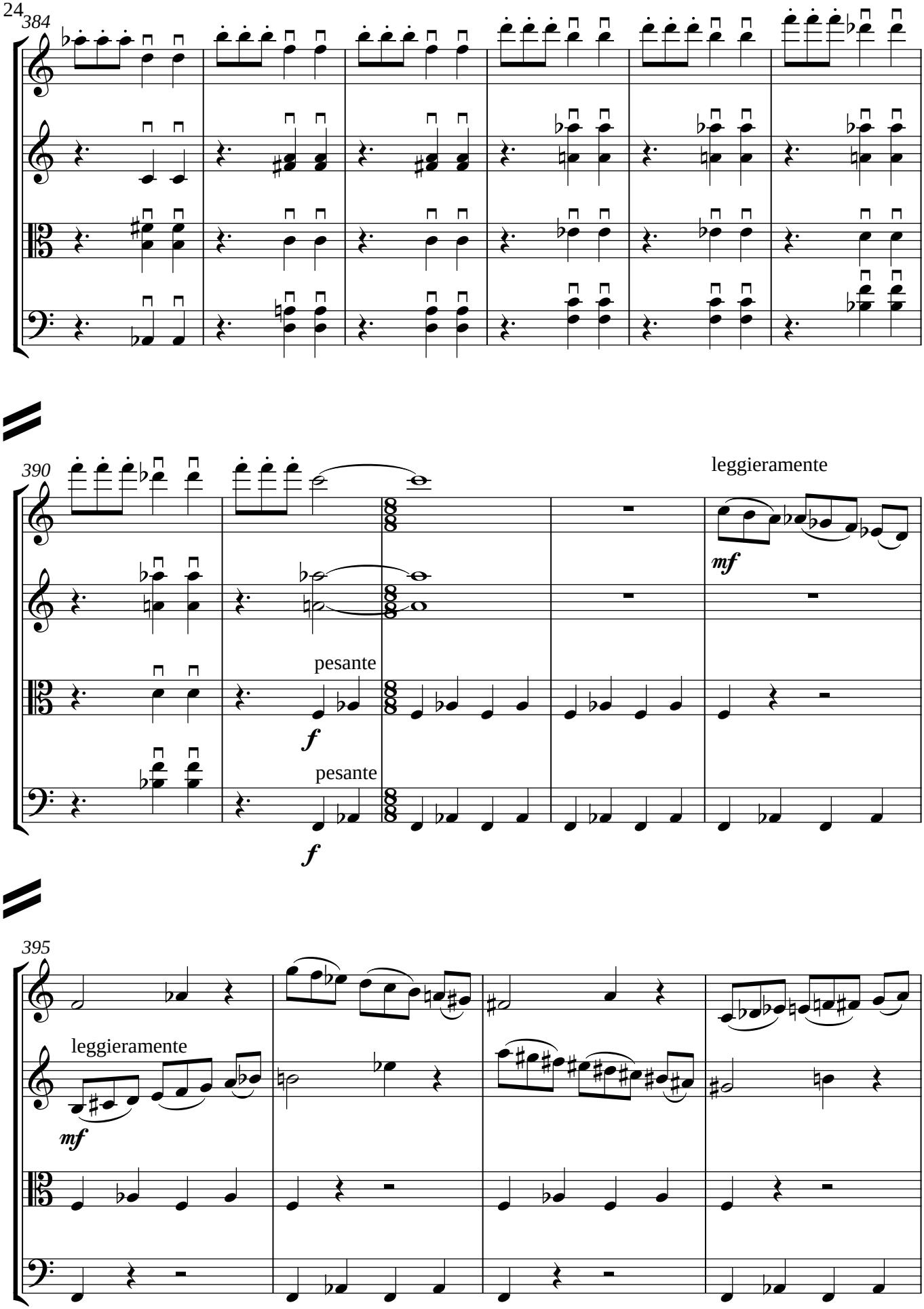

326
329
332
fff
fff
fff
fff


336
f
f
341
mf
mf
f
f
345
mf
mf
f
f


349
mf
f
353
mf
f
357
mf
f


361
mf
sfzp
365
369


372
f
f
f
375
f
379
fff
fff
fff
fff


384
390
leggieramente
mf
pesante
f
pesante
f
395
leggieramente
mf

399

leggieramente

403

407

con forza

f

con forza

sfz

con forza

sfz

411

con forza

f *f* *f* *f*

sfz *sim.*

sfz *sim.*

415

f *f* *f*

f

418

ff

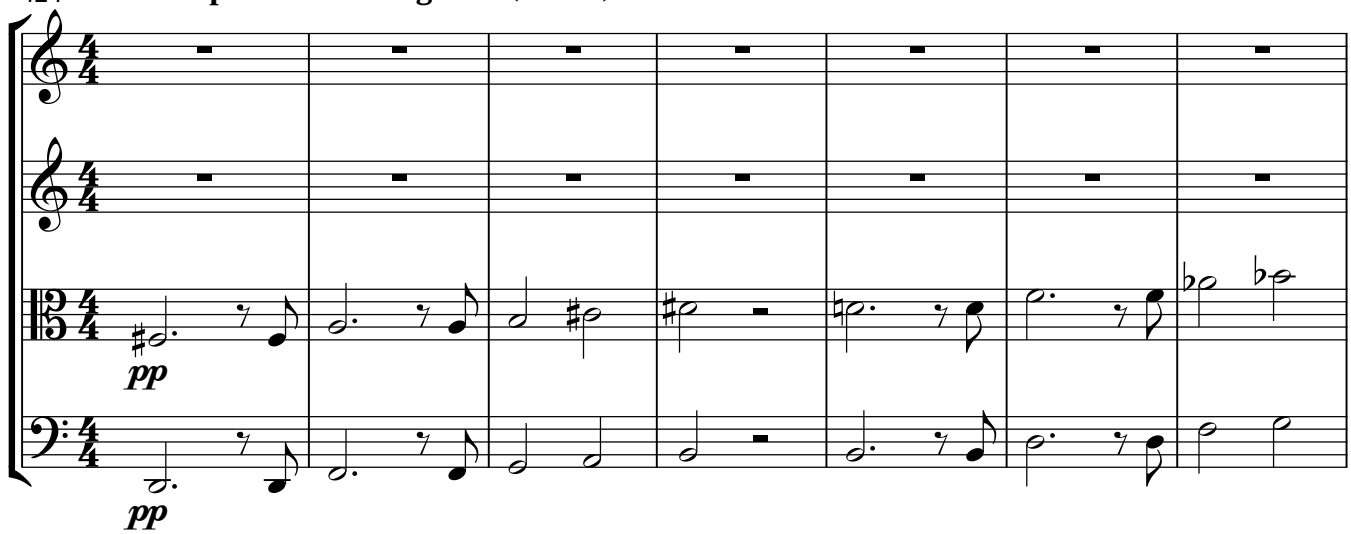
ff

ff

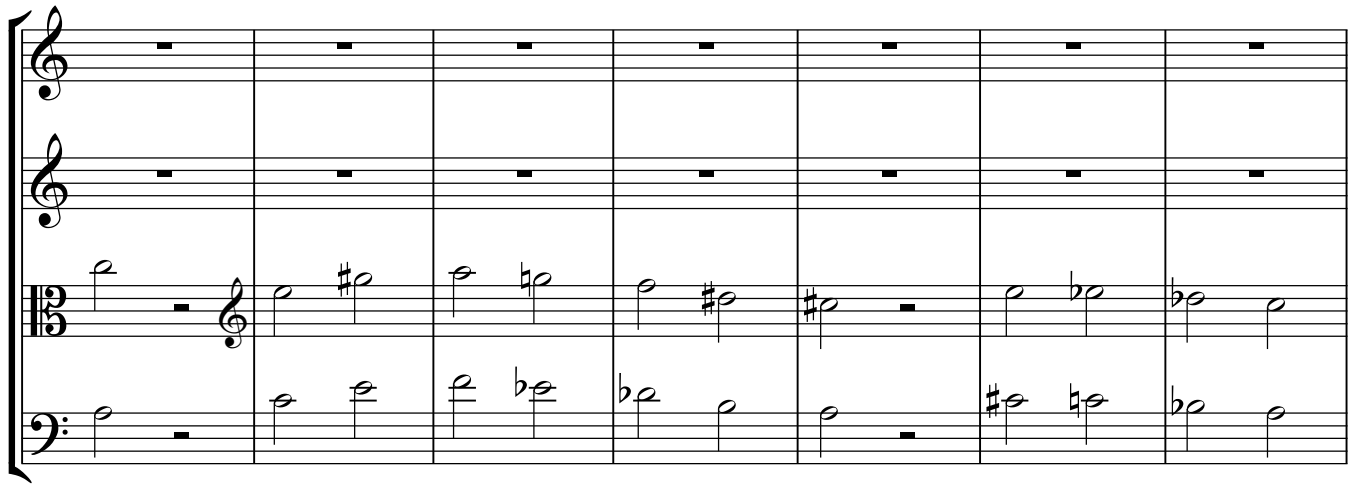
ff

Fourth Statement

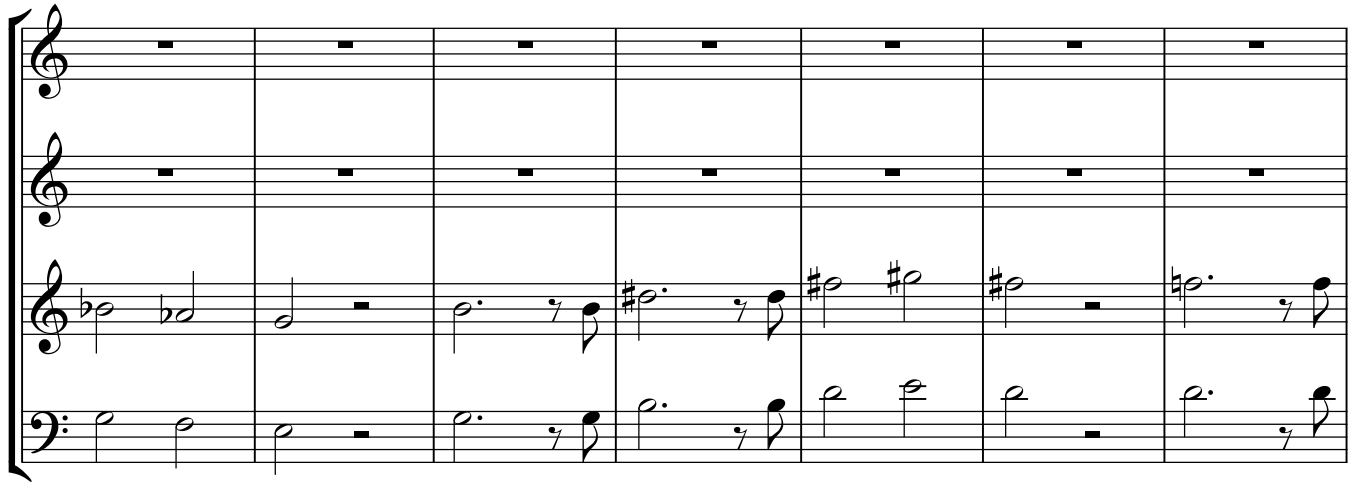
424 **Andante pianissimo e legato** (= 72)



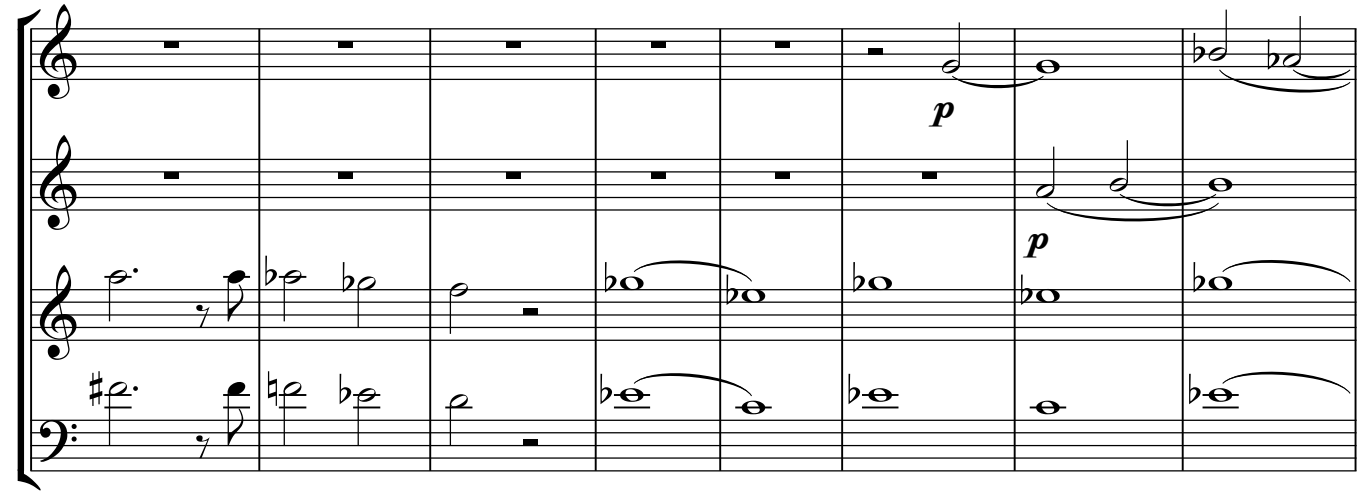
431



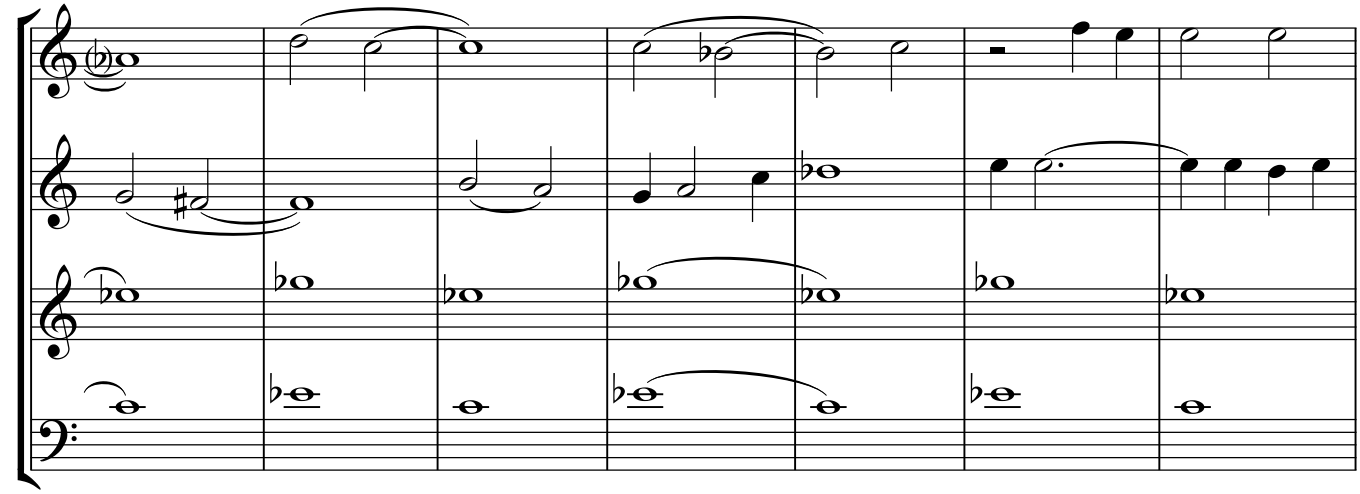
438



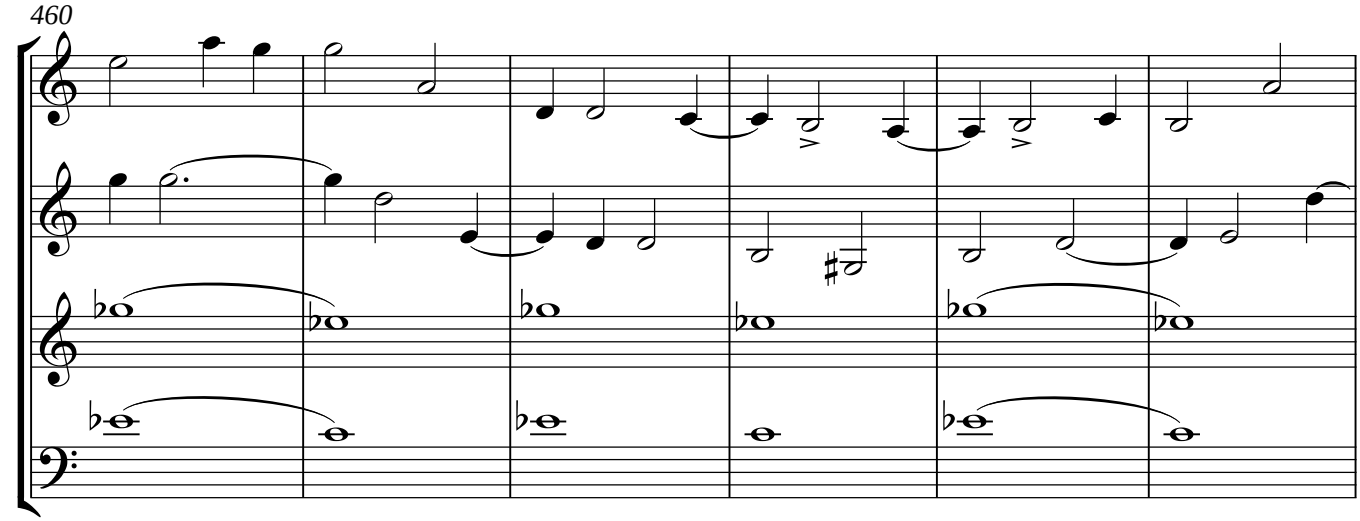
445



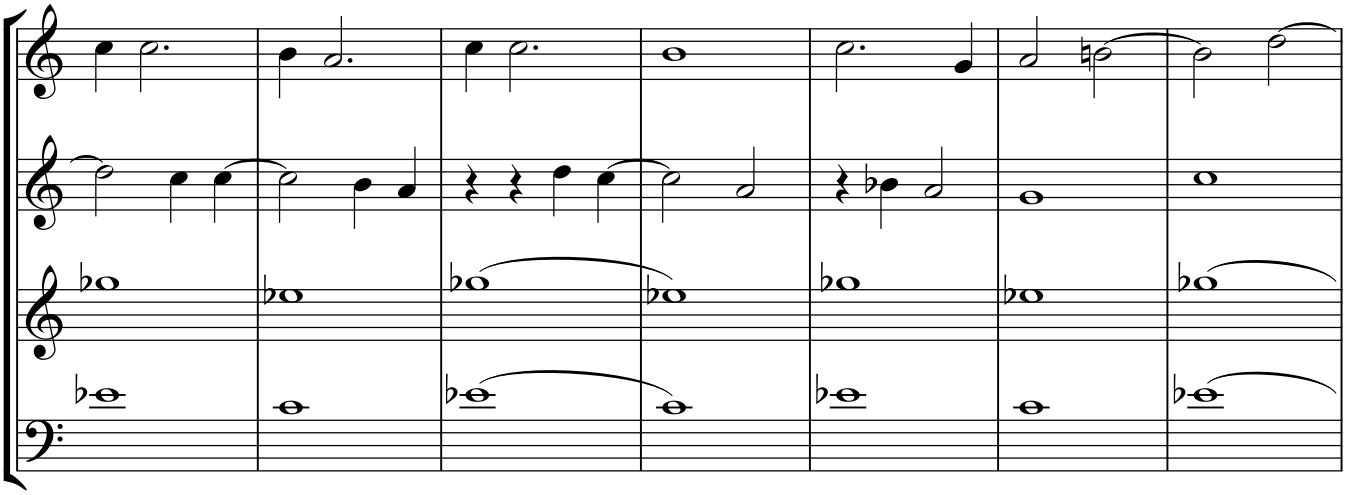
453



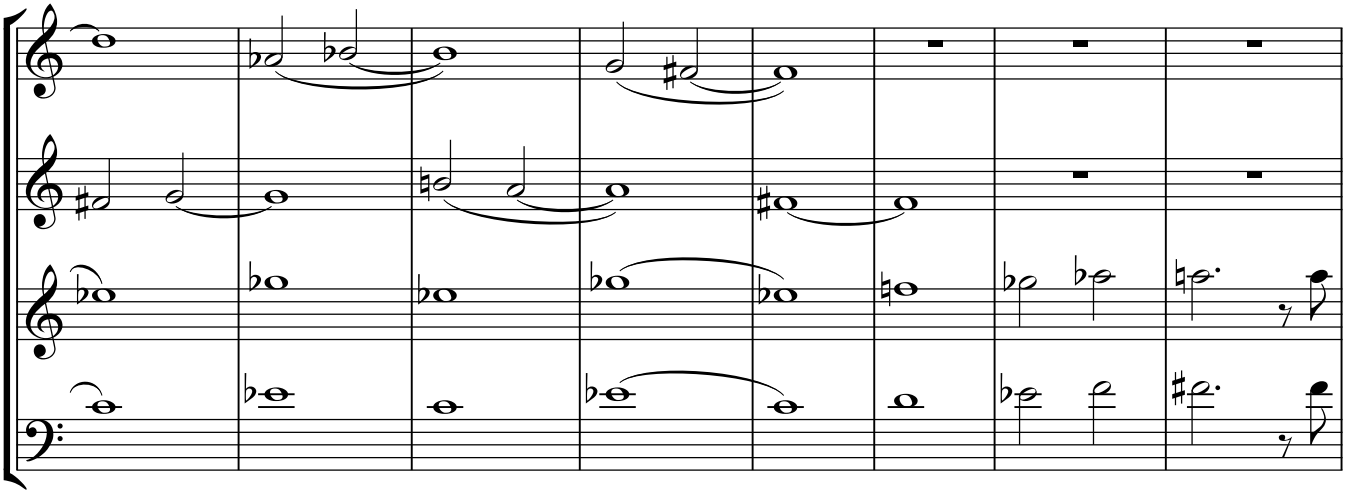
460



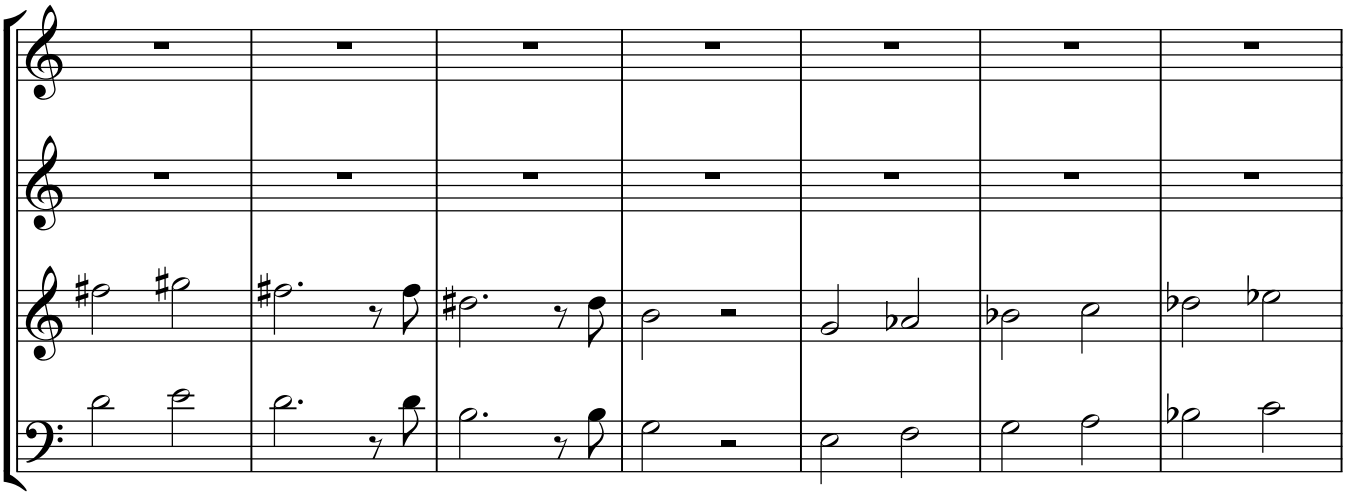
466



473

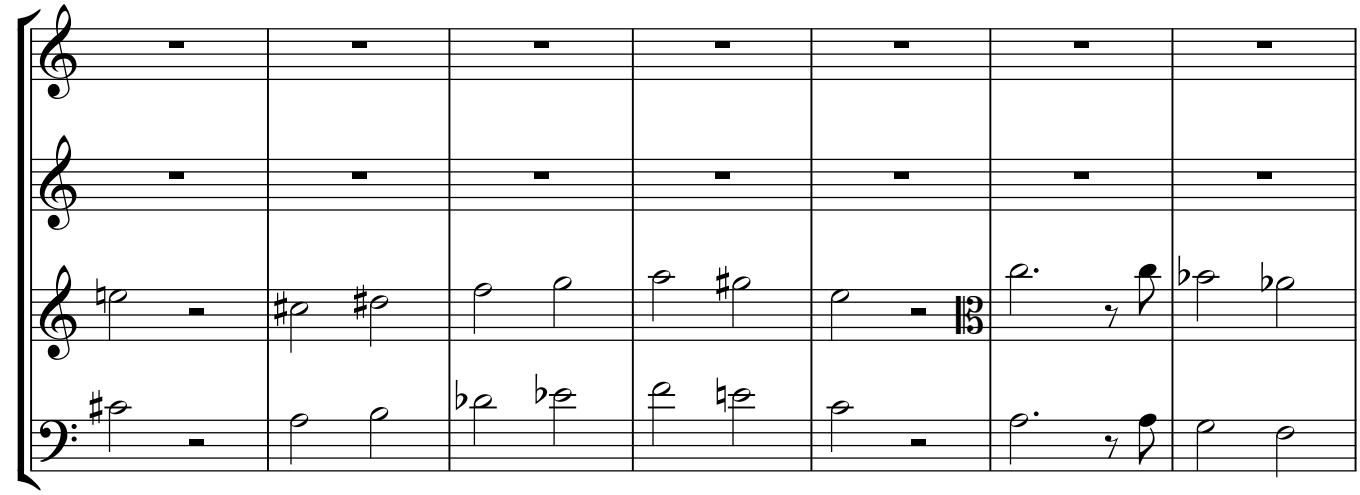


481

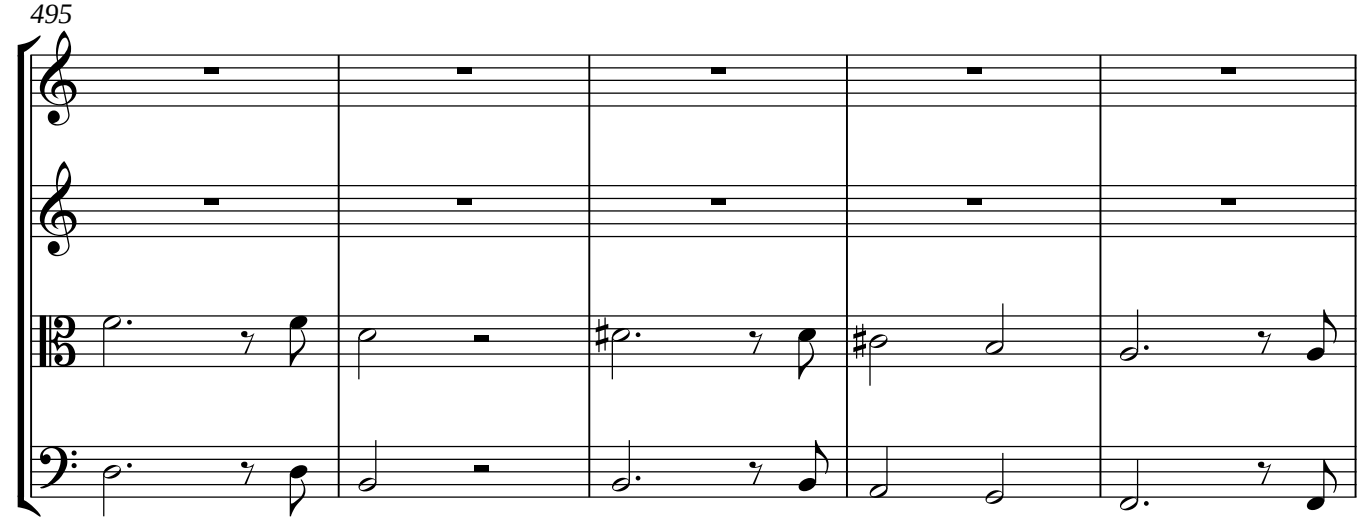


30

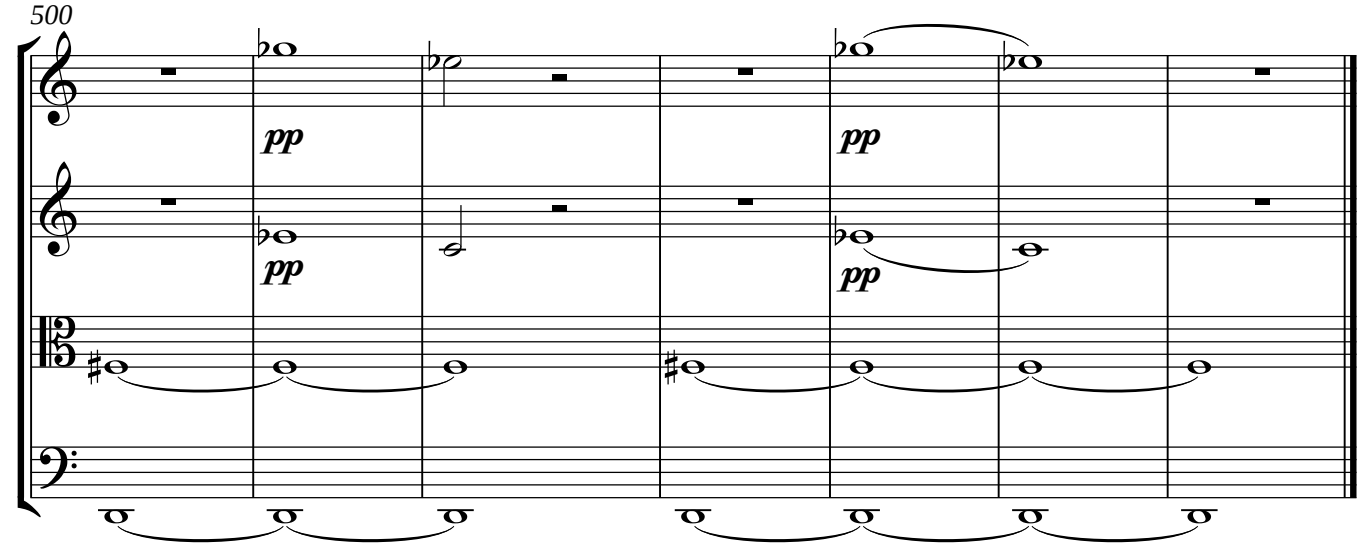
488

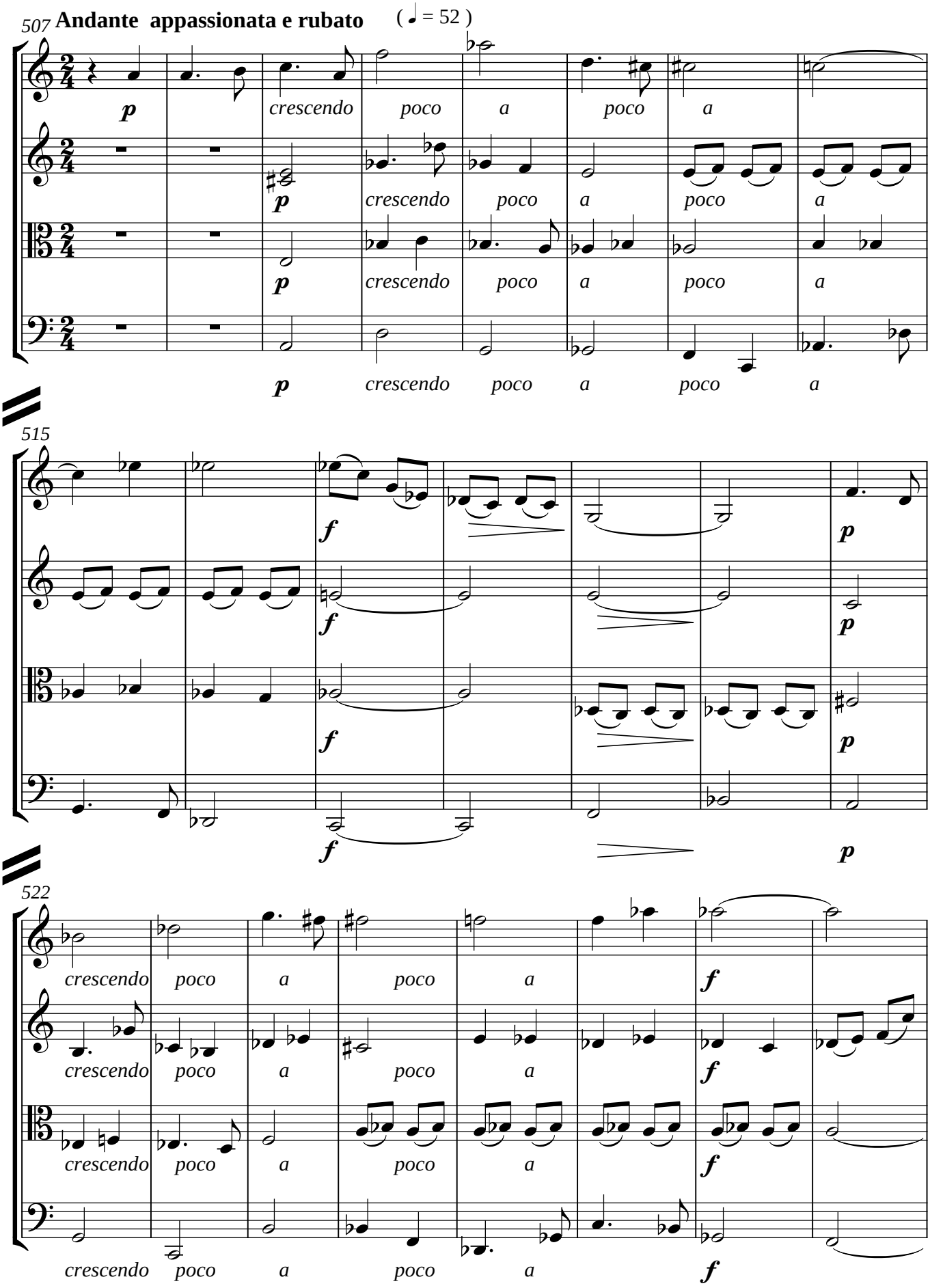


495



500




507
Andante appassionata e rubato
(= 52)
p
crescendo poco a poco a
515
f
p
522
f

530

539

diminuendo poco a poco rallentando

diminuendo poco a poco rallentando

diminuendo poco rallentando

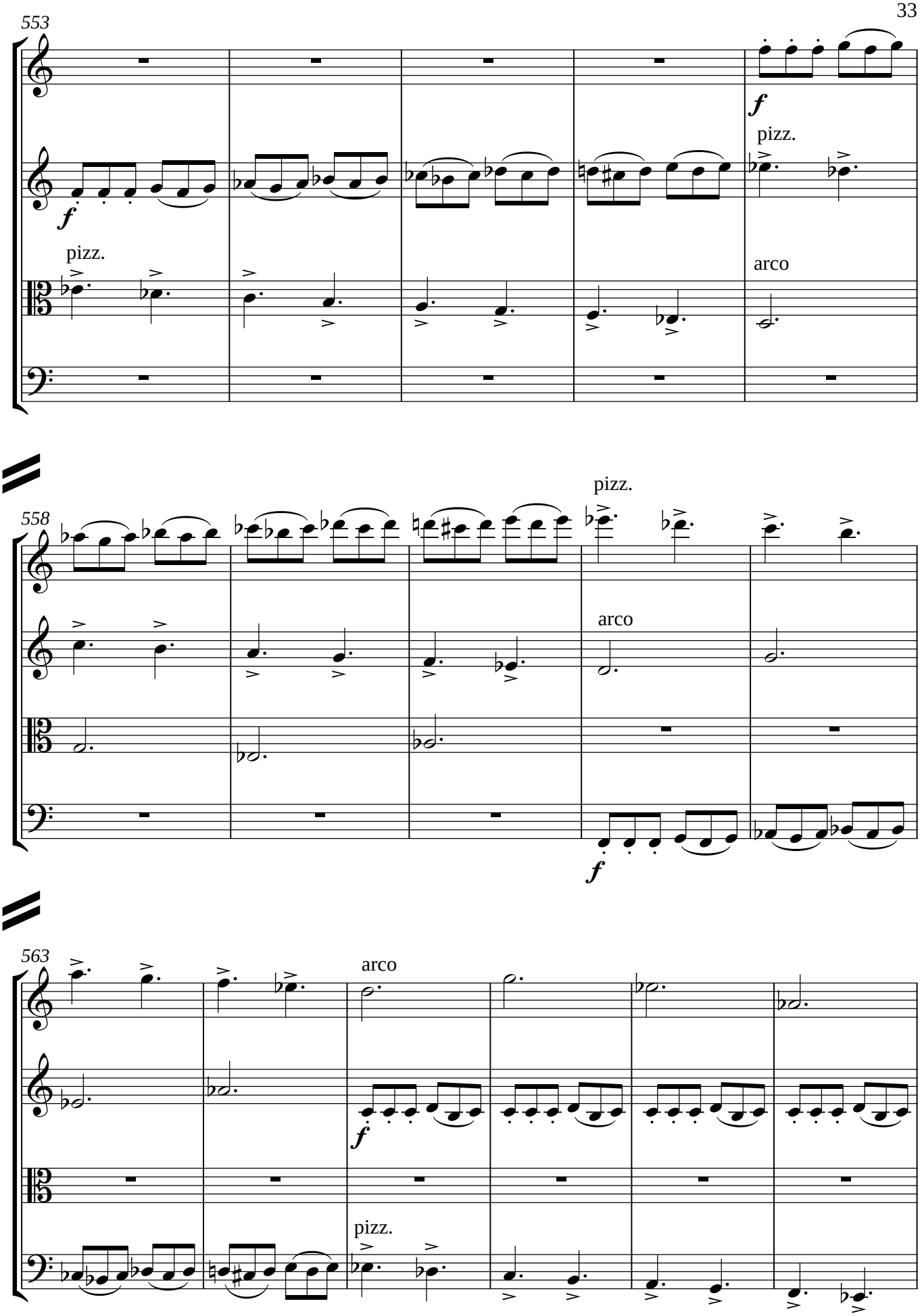
diminuendo poco **a poco** rallentando

547

Allegro agitato (♩. = 140)

f

sfz


553
f
pizz.
pizz.
arco
558
pizz.
arco
f
563
arco
f
pizz.

569

f

arco

575

f

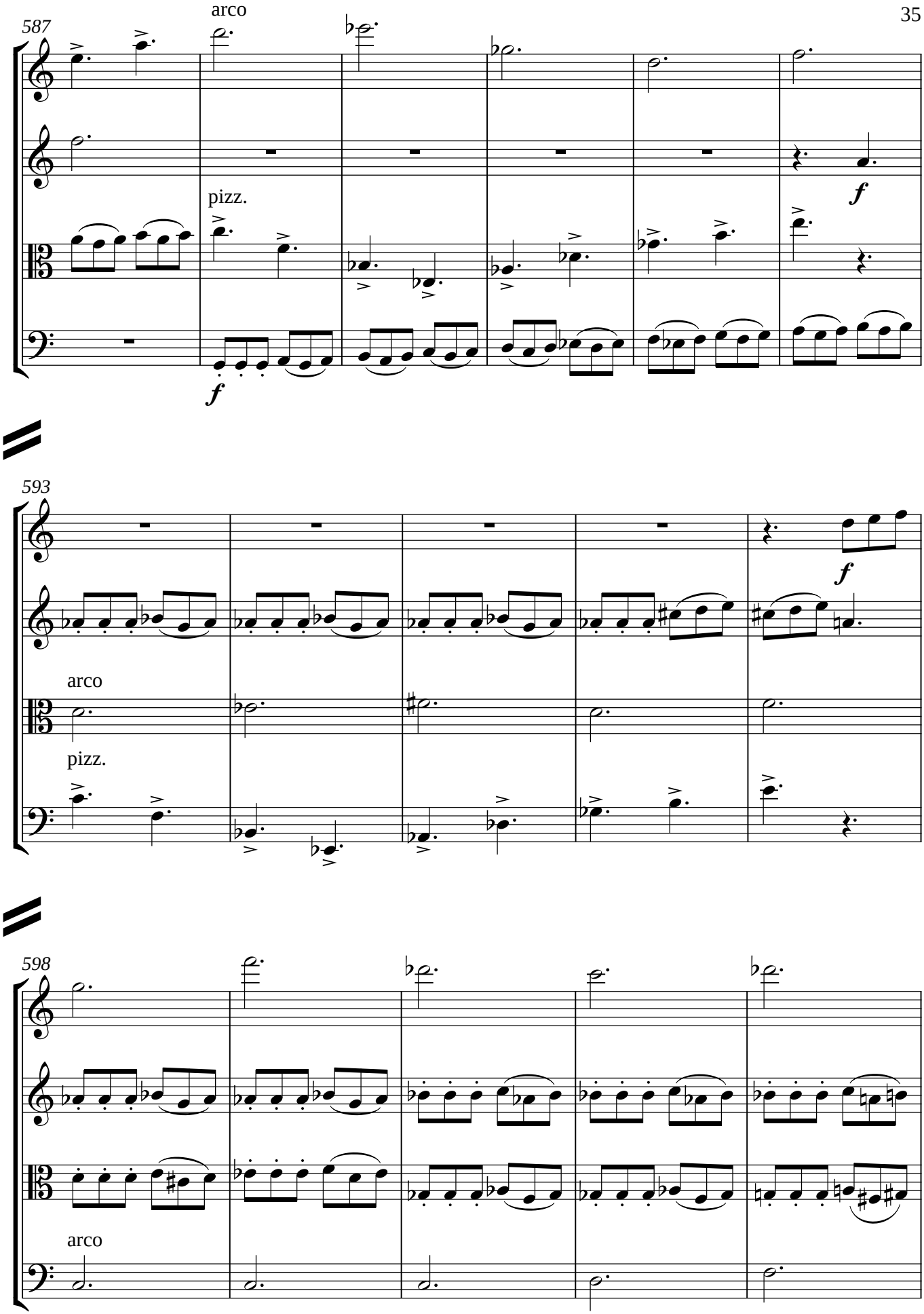
pizz.

581

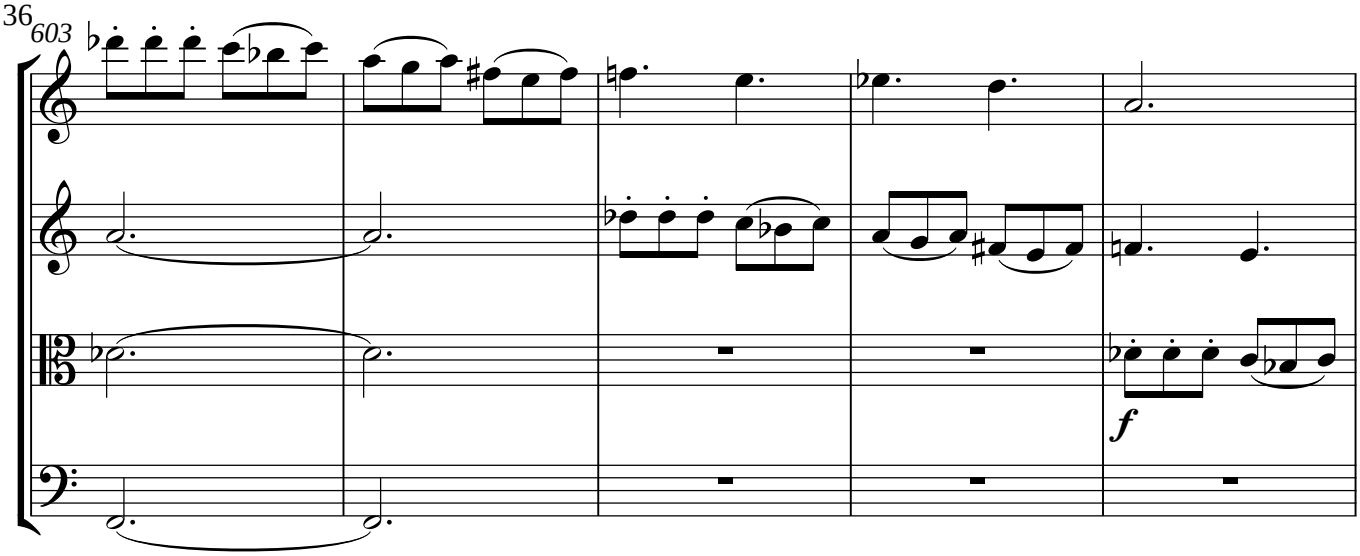
pizz.

arco

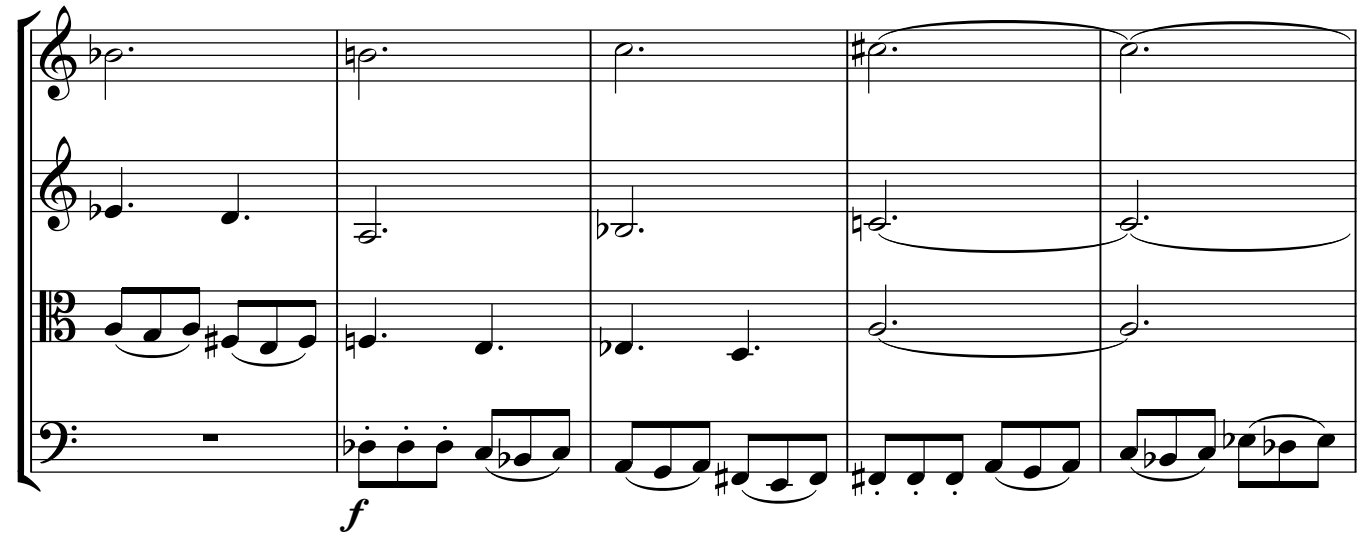
f


587
arco
pizz.
f
f
593
f
arco
pizz.
598
arco

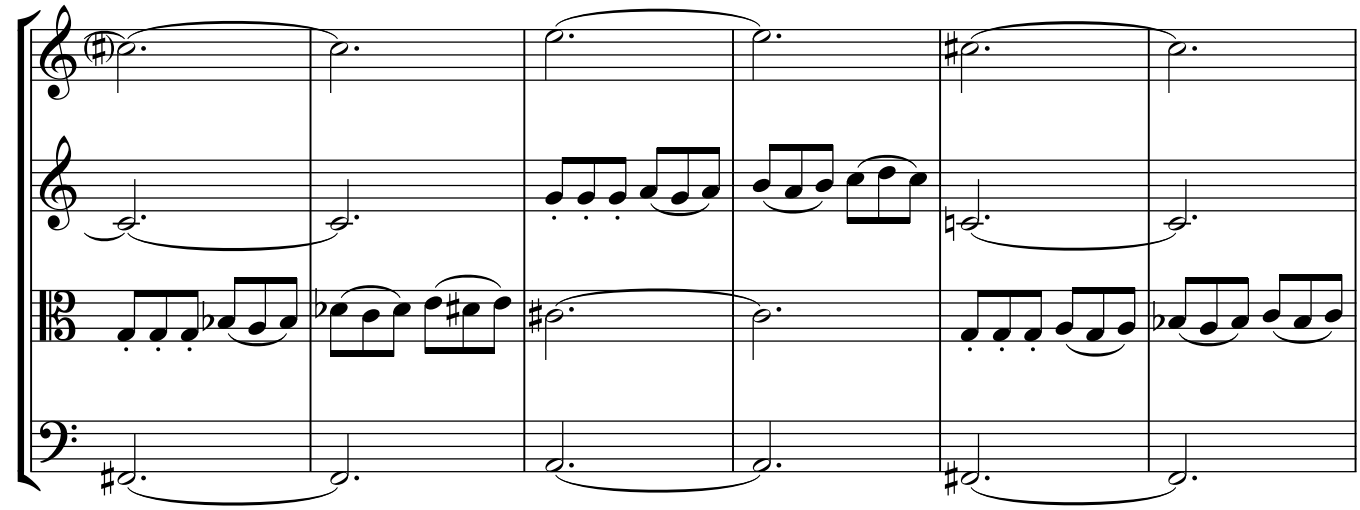
603

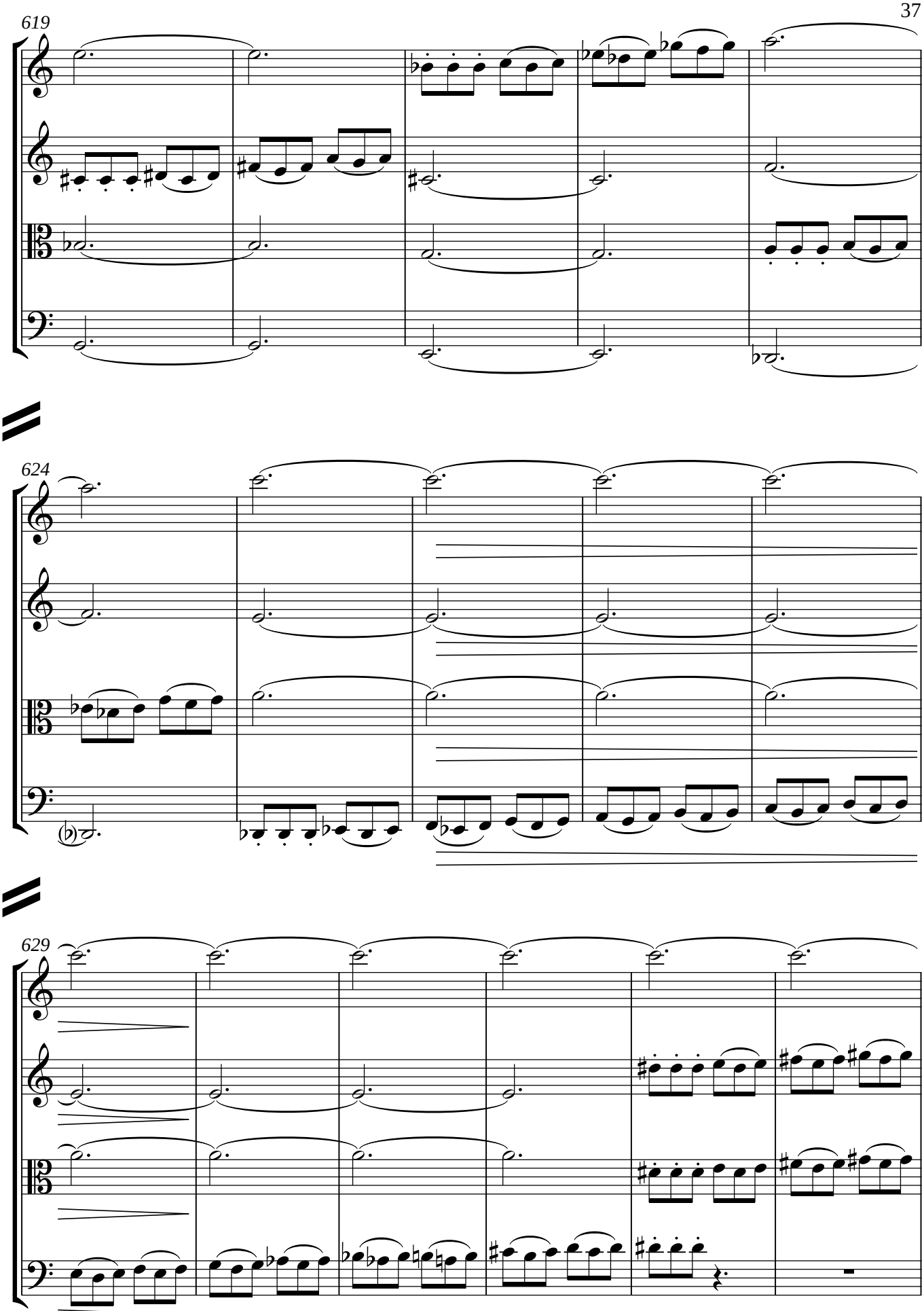


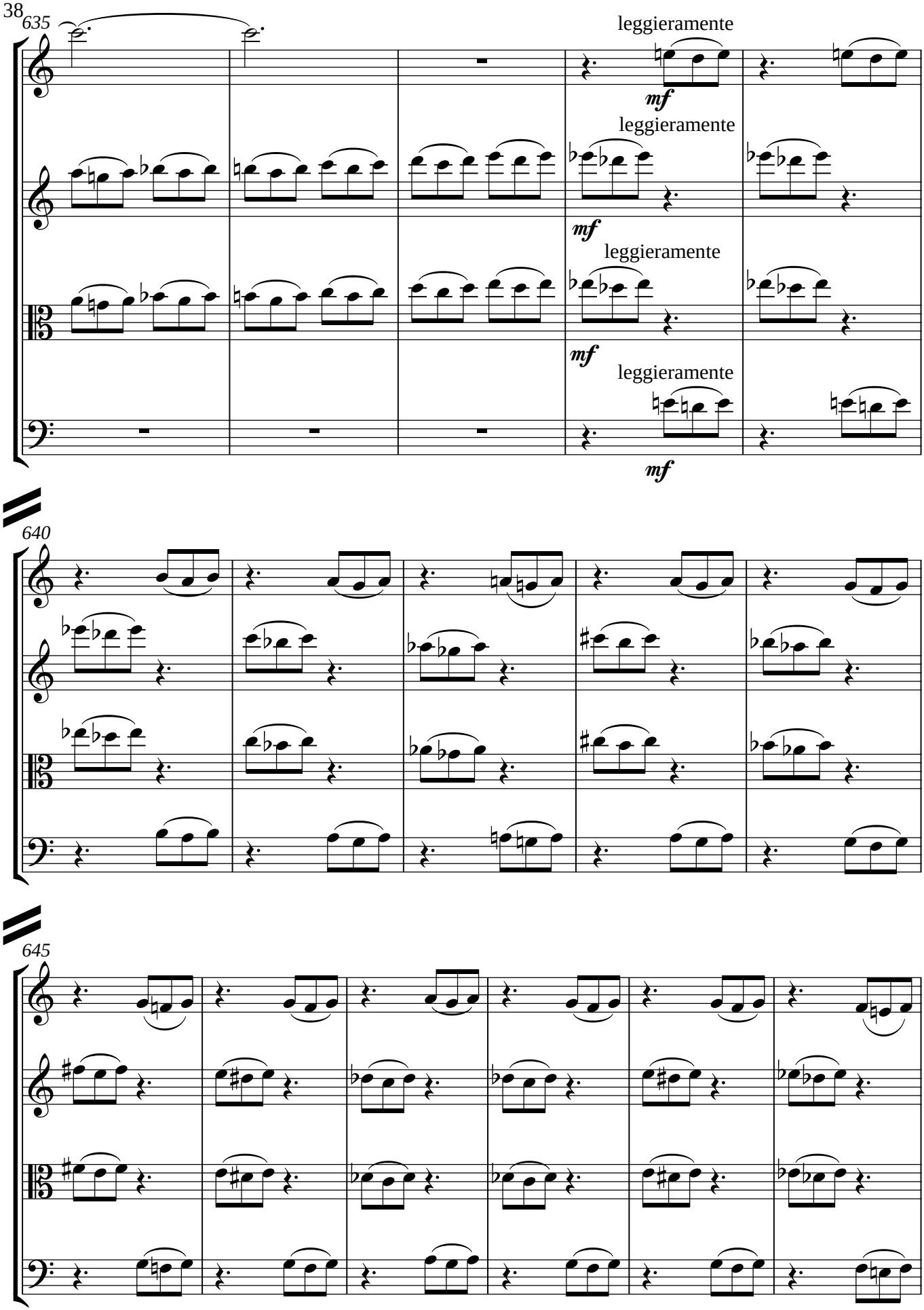
608



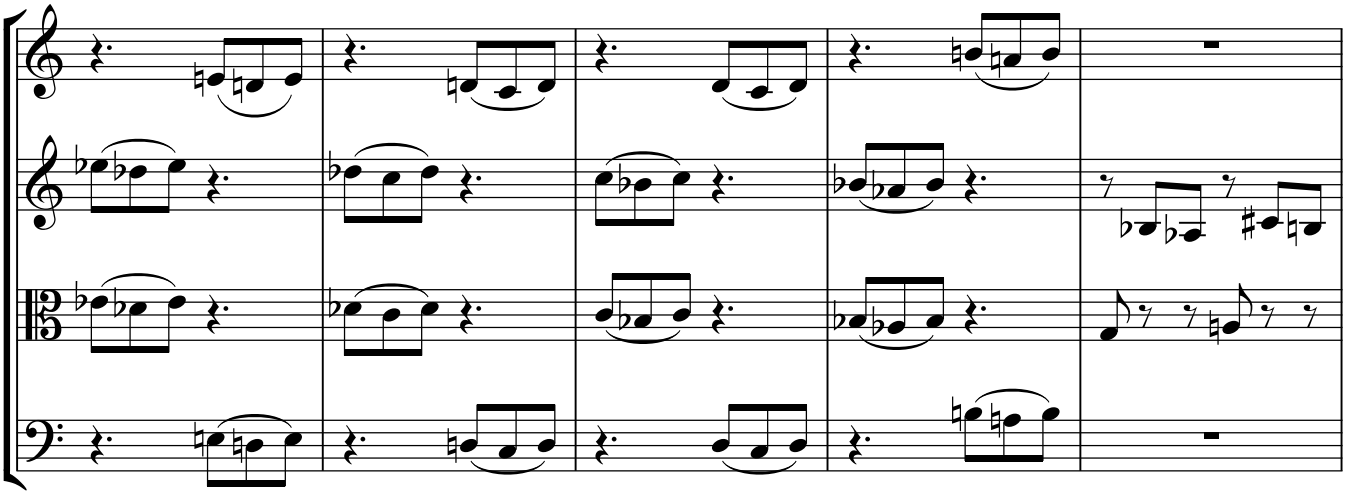
613



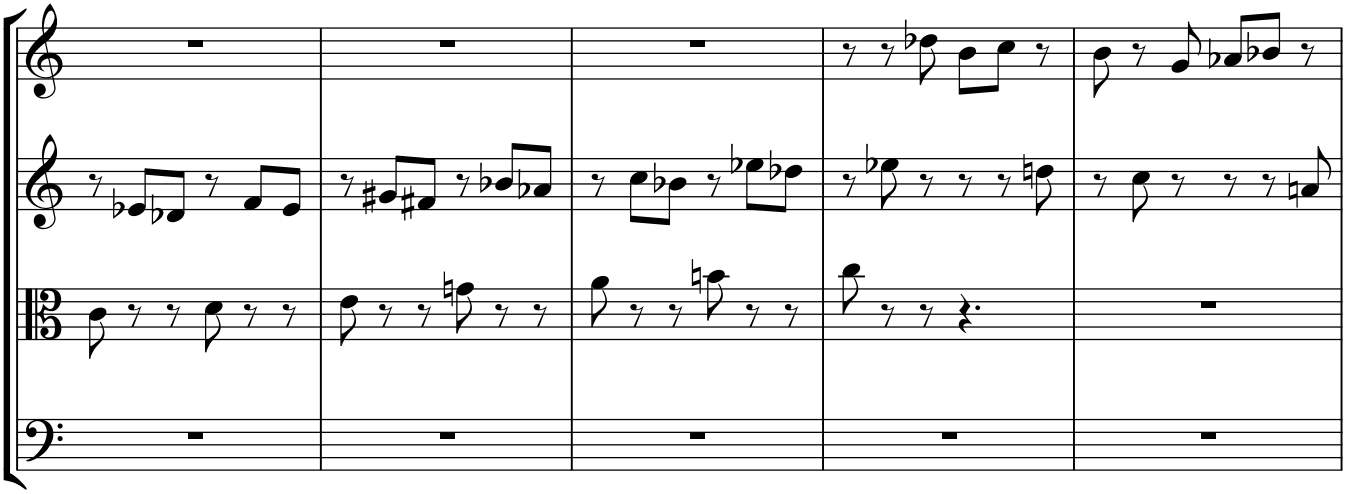

619
624
629


635
leggieramente
mf
leggieramente
mf
leggieramente
mf
leggieramente
mf
640
645

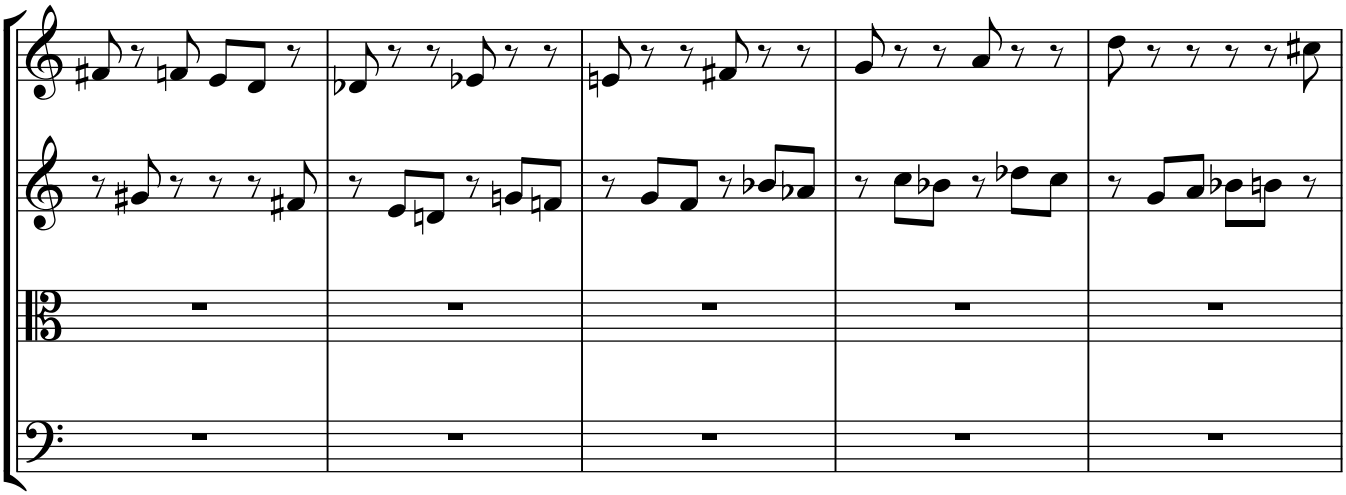
651



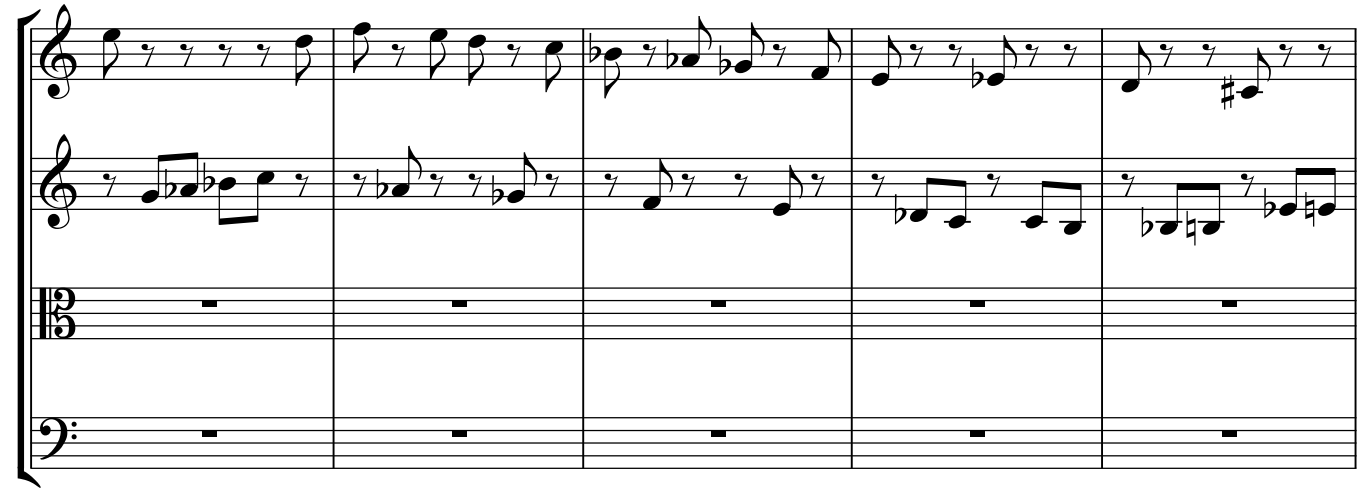
656



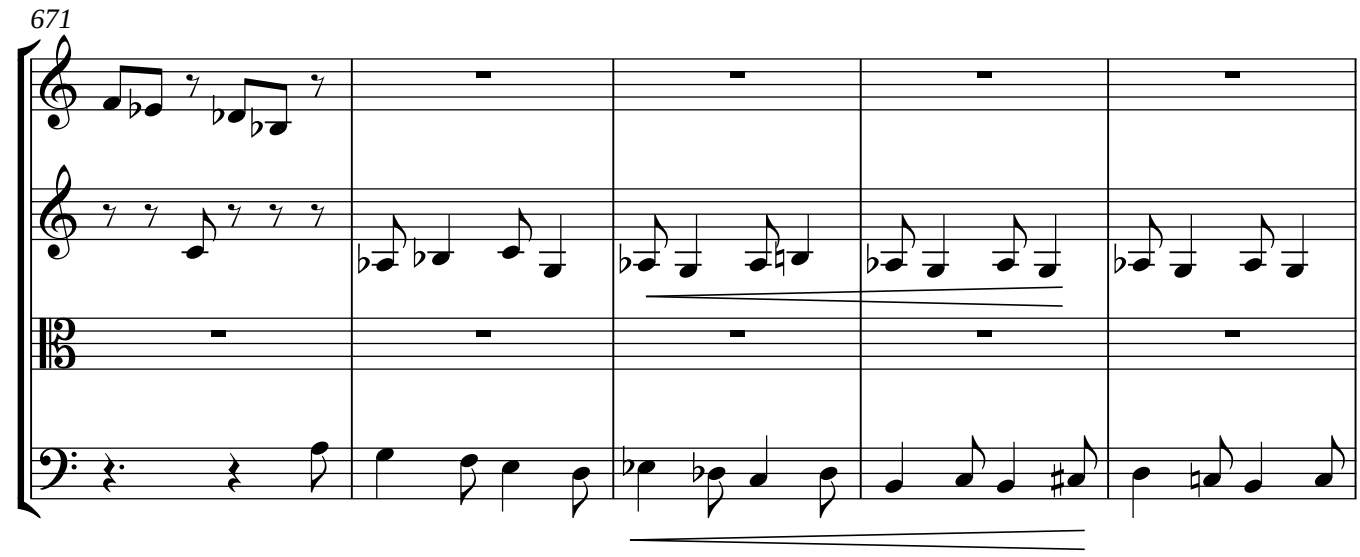
661



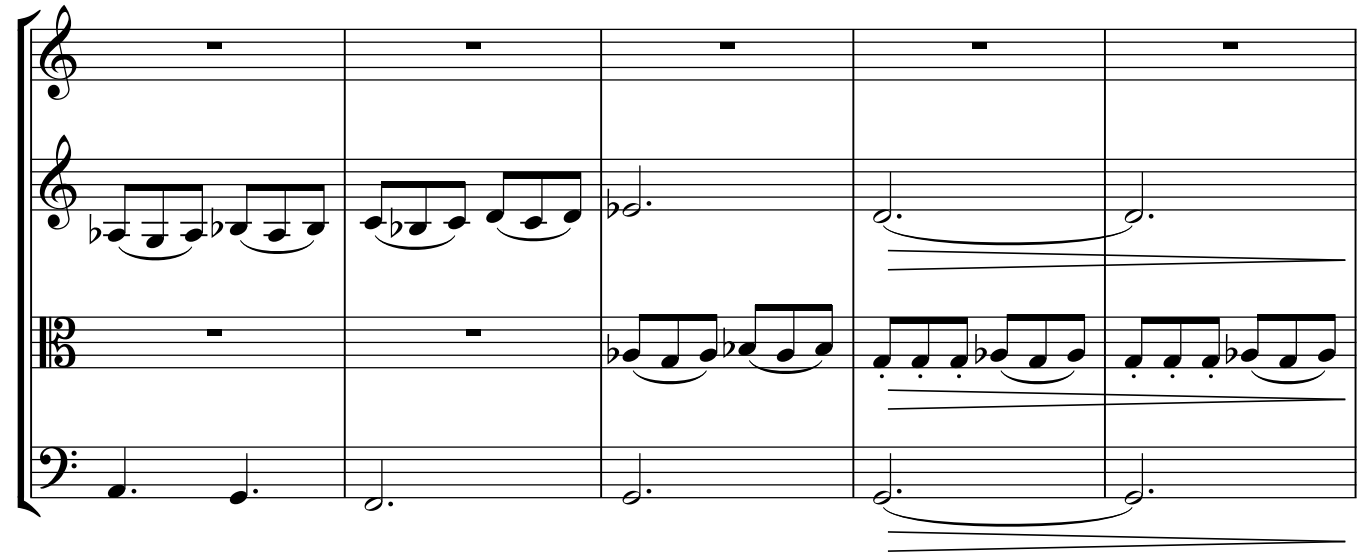
666

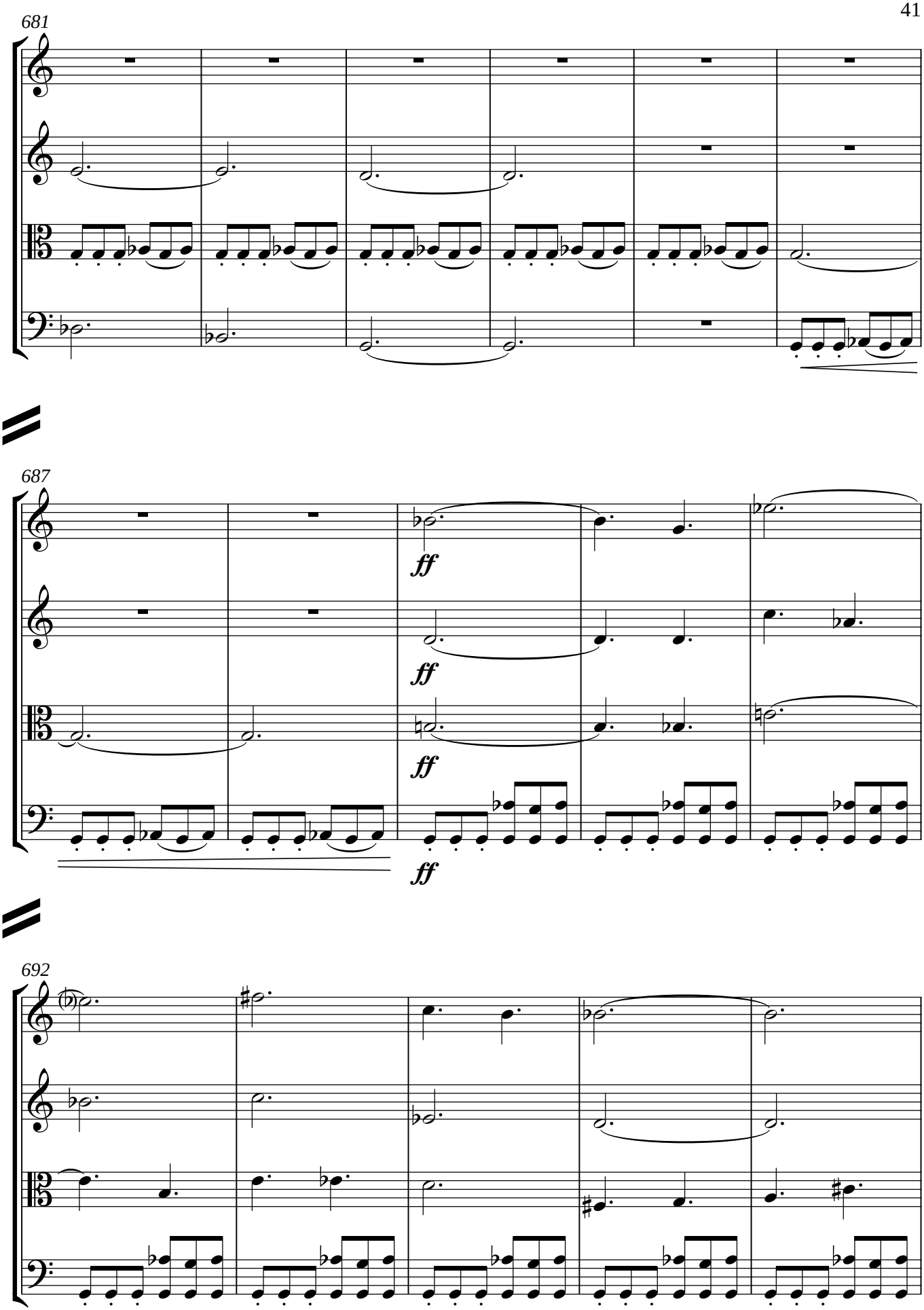


671

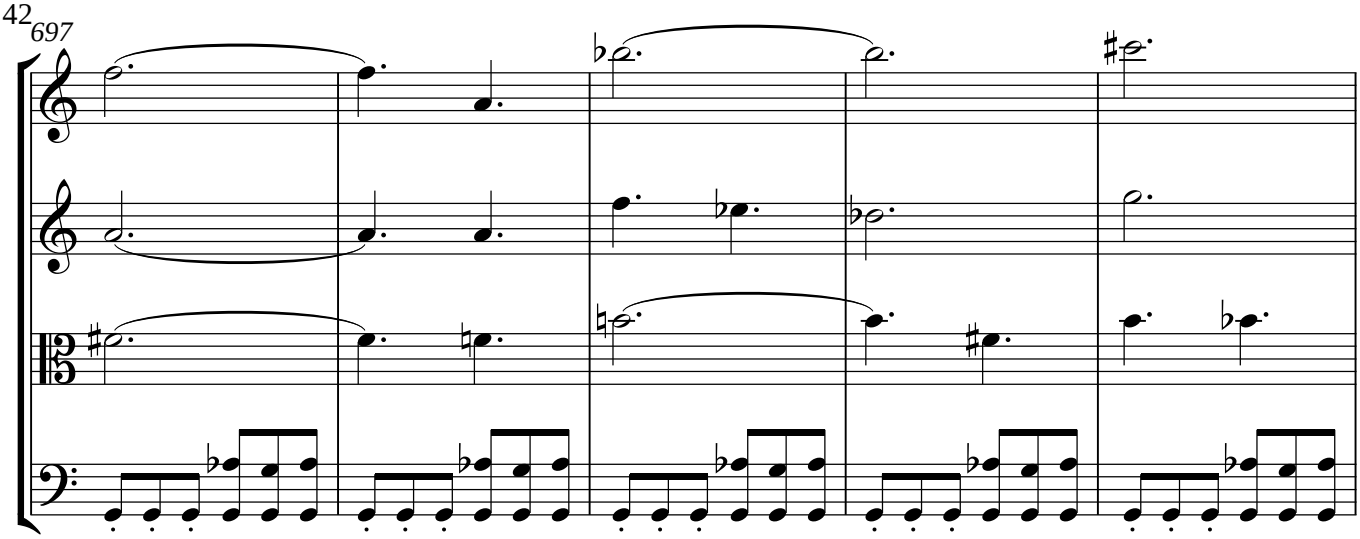


676

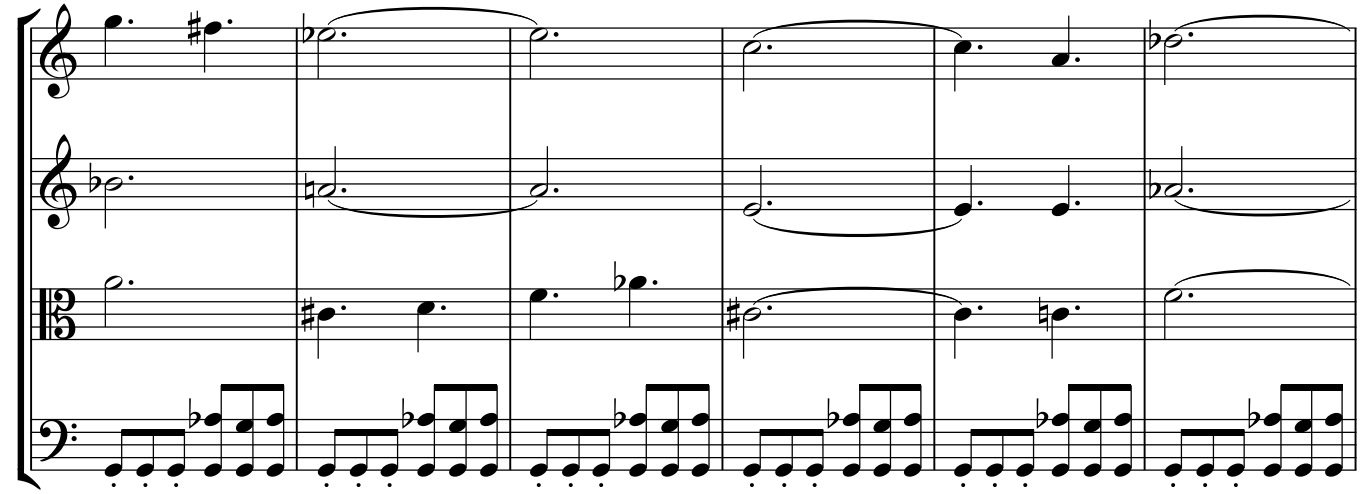



681
687
ff
ff
ff
ff
692

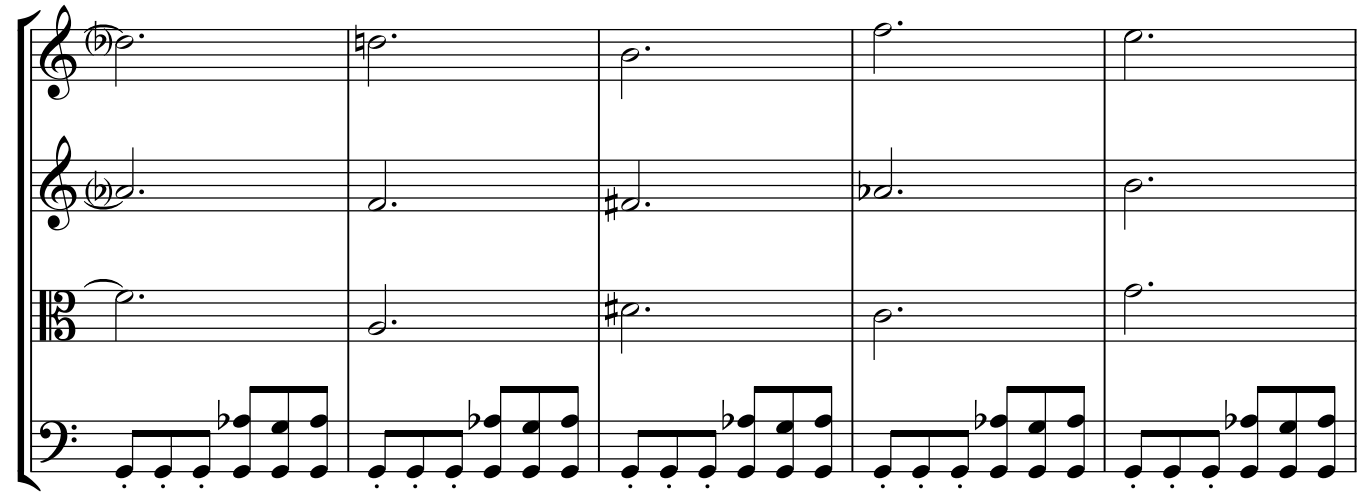
697



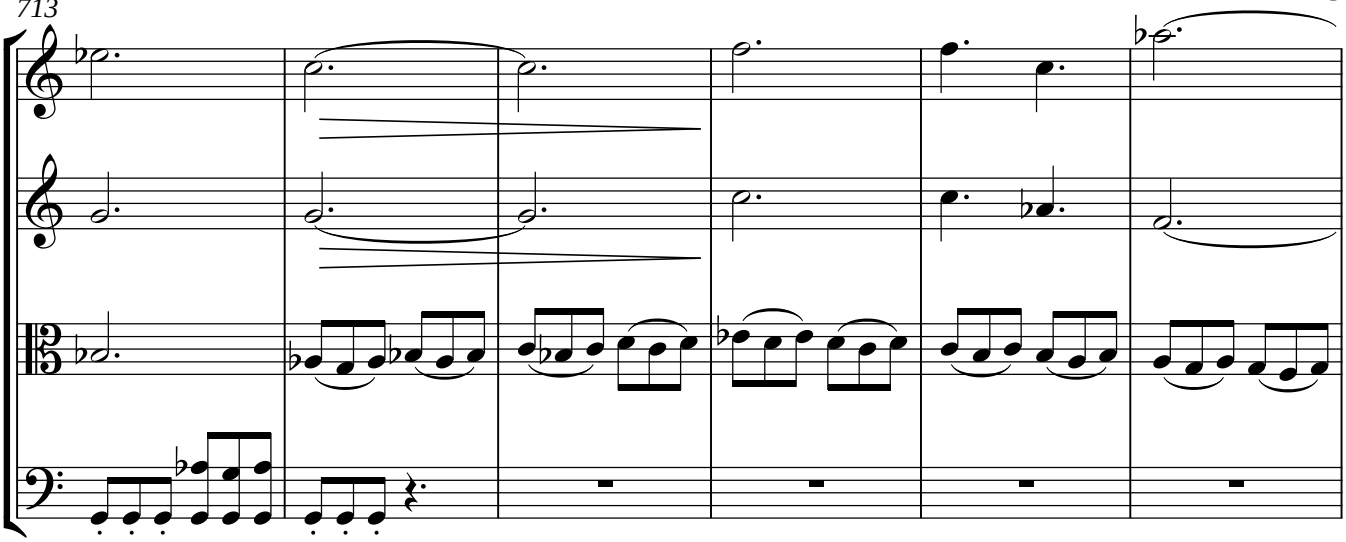
702



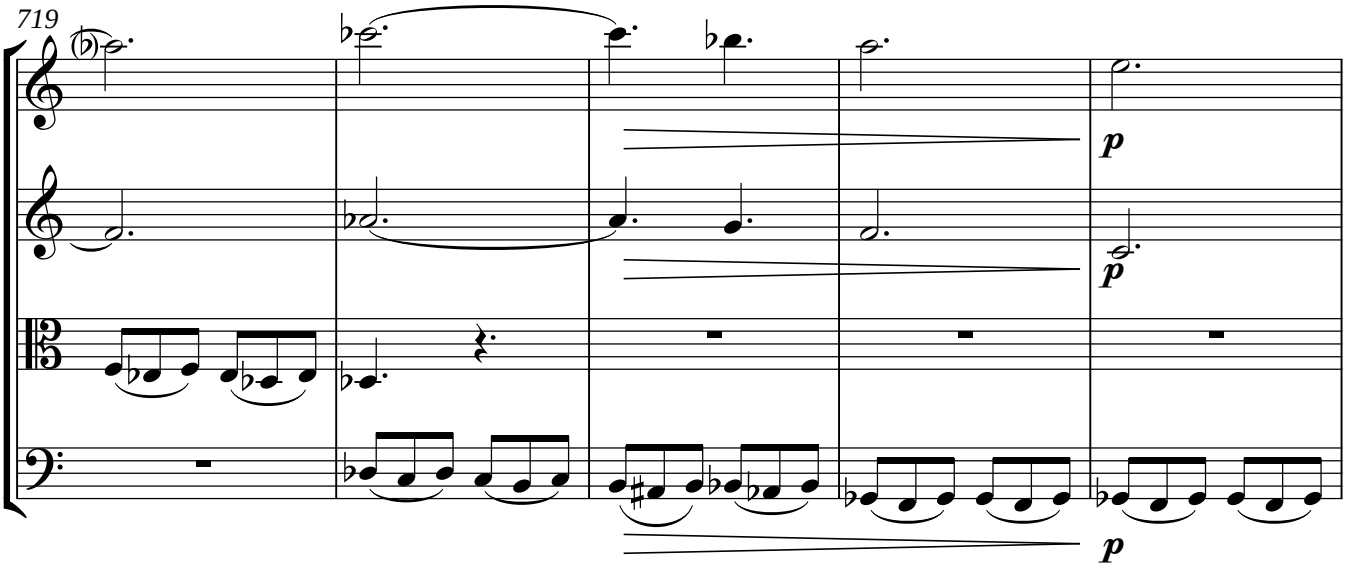
708



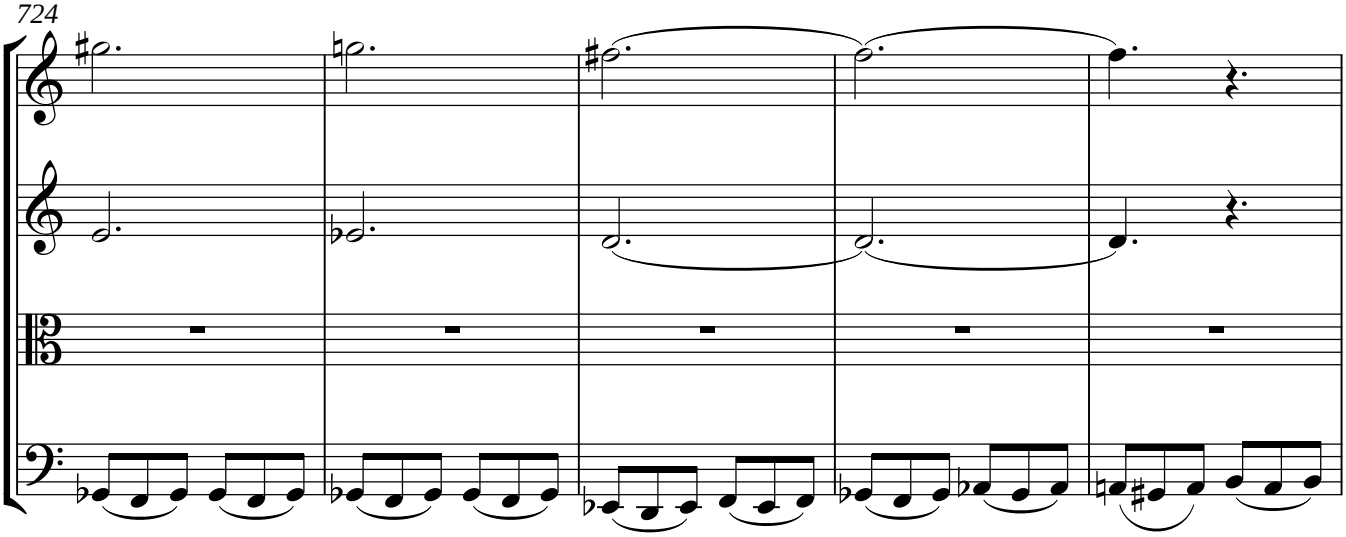
713



719



724



729

crescendo

mf *crescendo*

crescendo

734

f *crescendo*

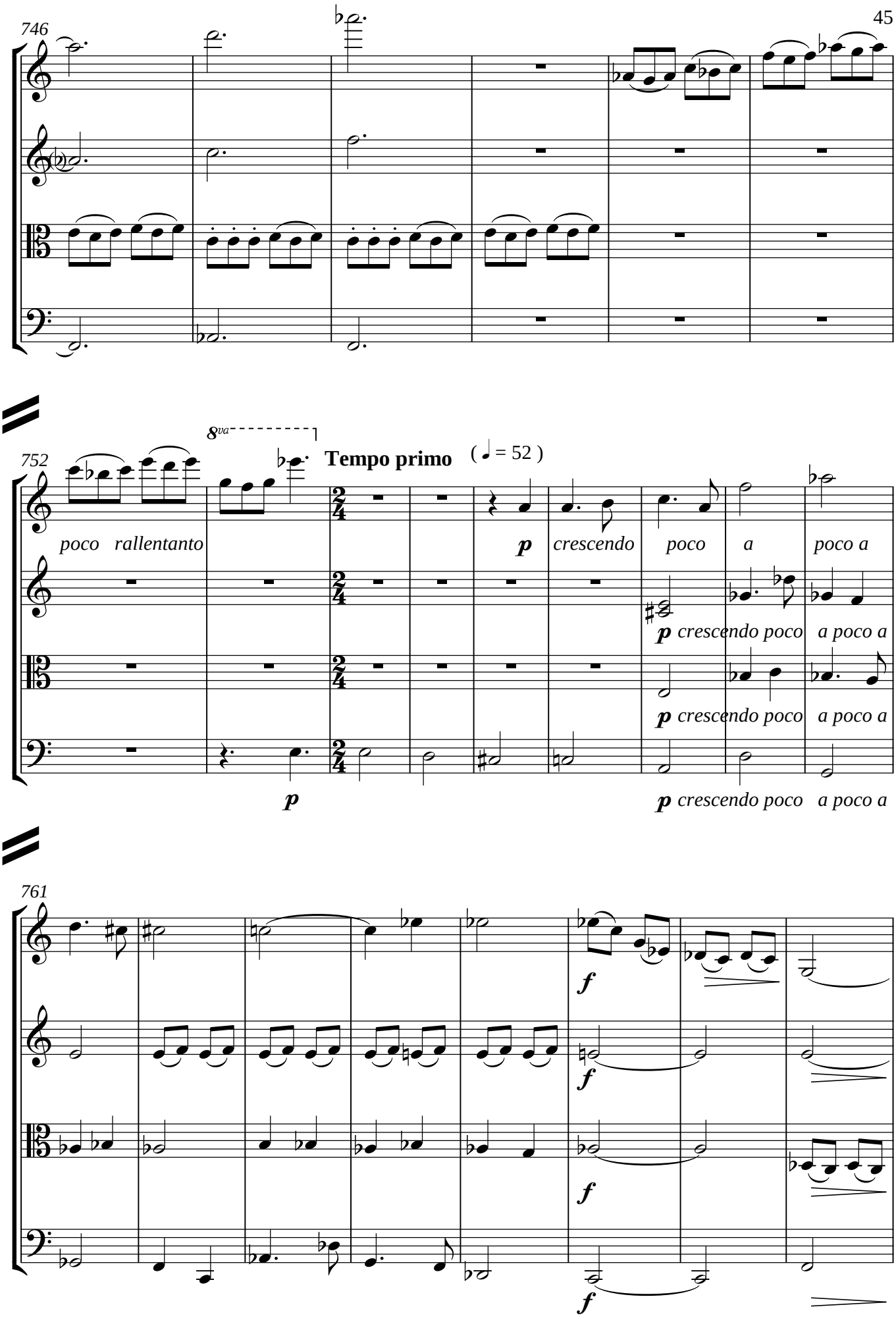
740

rallentando *e diminuendo*

rallentando e diminuendo

rallentando *e diminuendo*

rallentando *e diminuendo*


746
752
8va
Tempo primo
(= 52)
poco rallentanto
p
crescendo poco a poco a
p crescendo poco a poco a
761
f

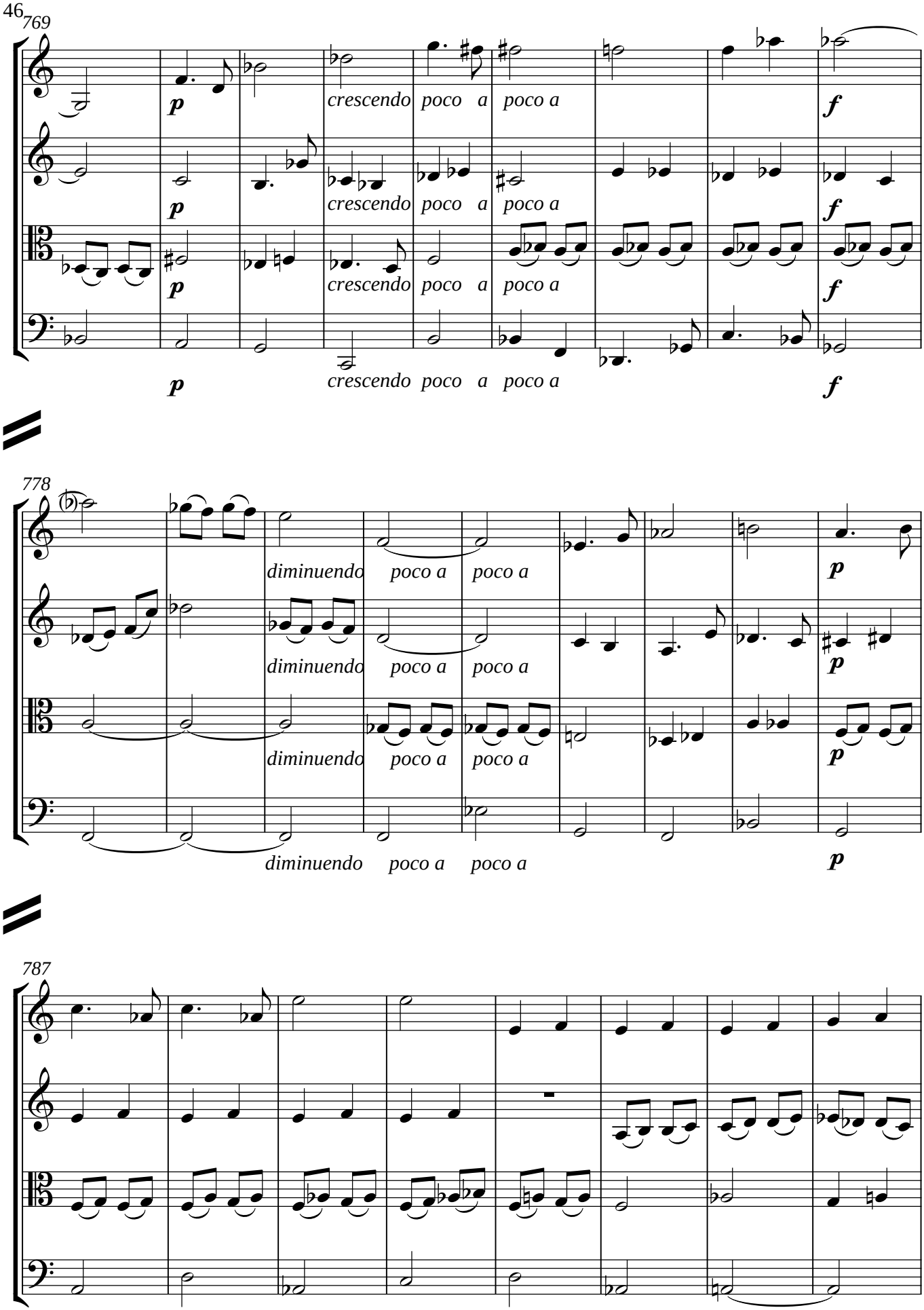
769

crescendo poco a poco a

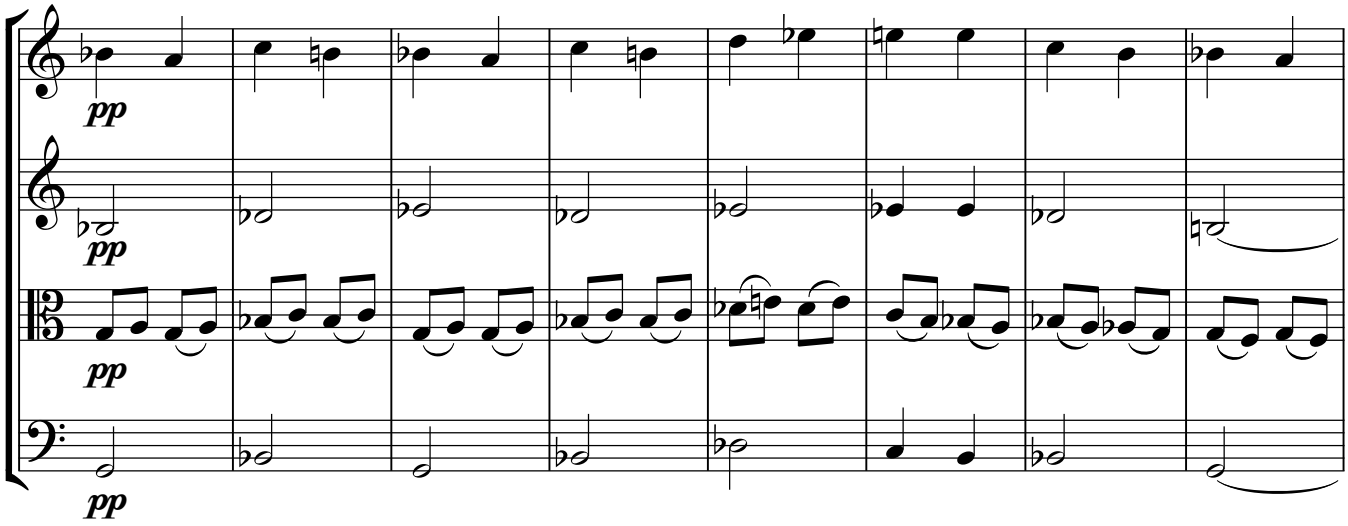
778

diminuendo poco a poco a

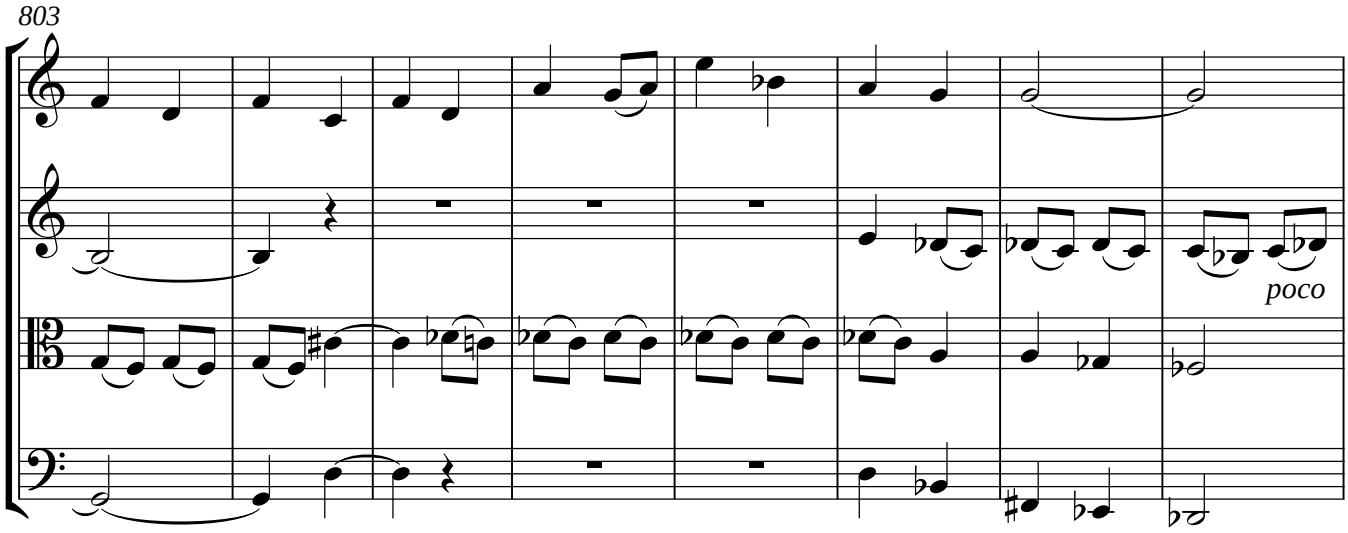
787



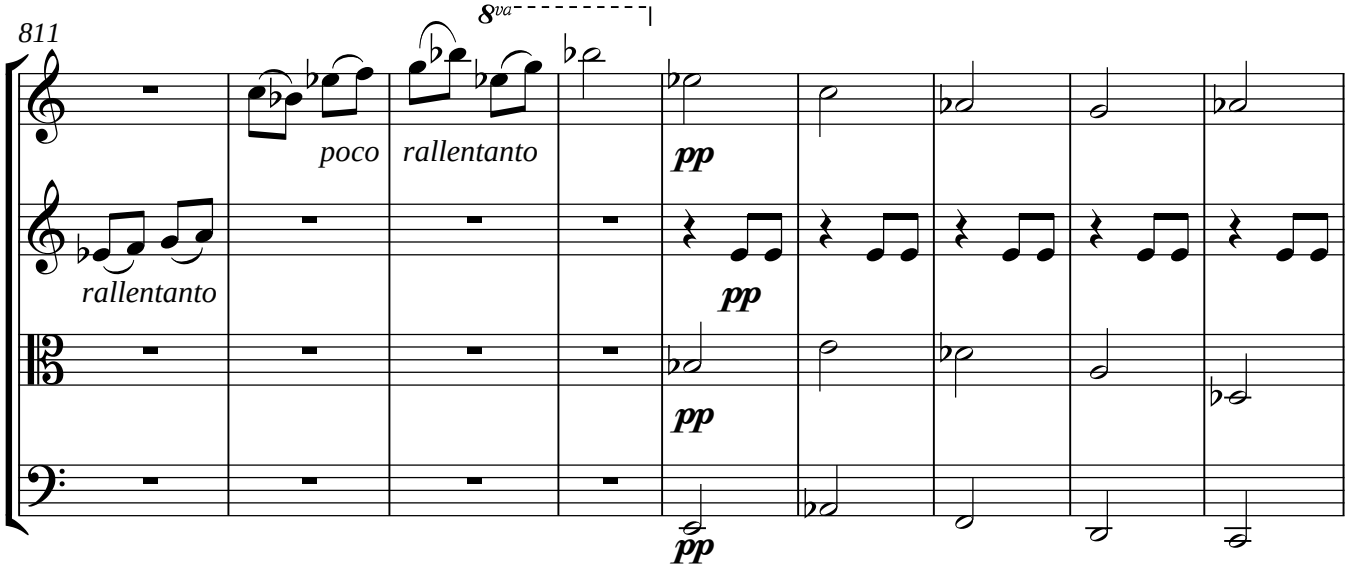
795



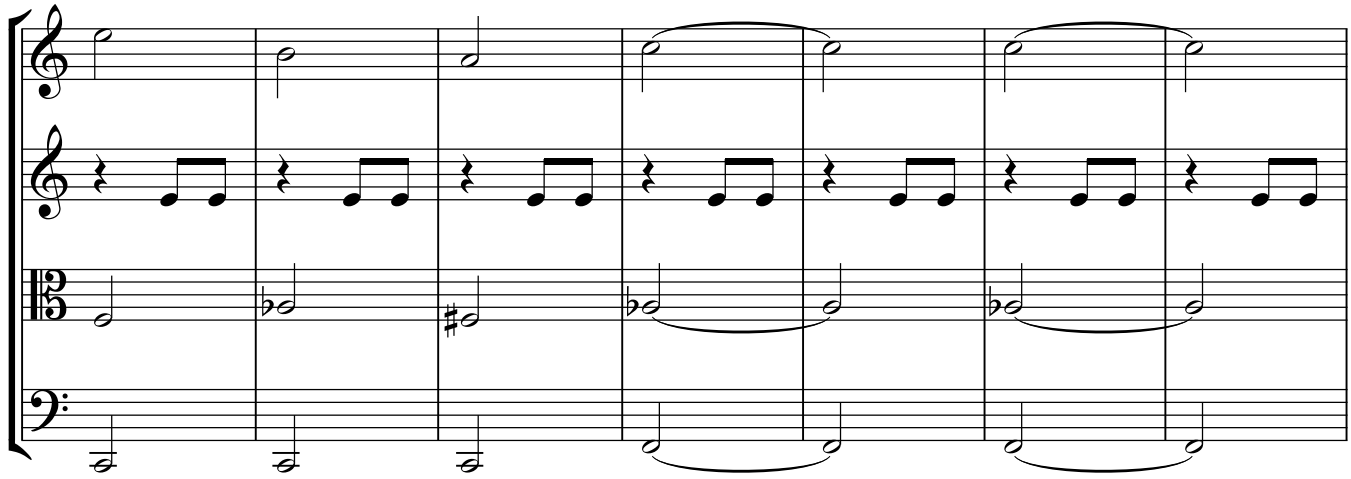
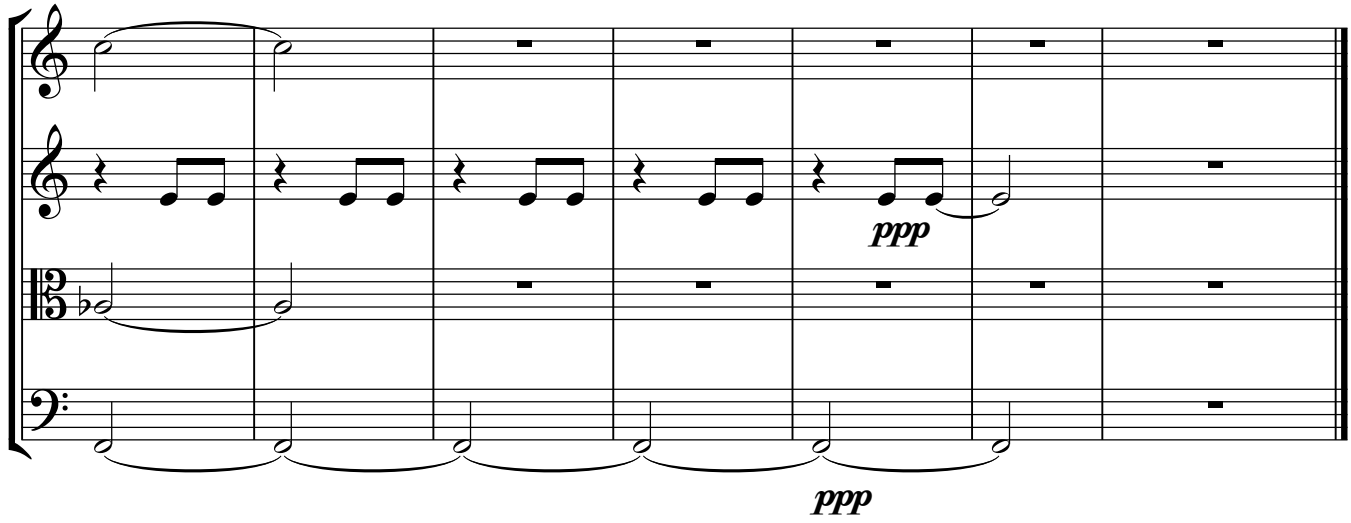
803



811



820



827